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THE  
REVELATION OF JOHN

MADE PLAIN

BY AN

EXPLANATION OF THE LAW OF SEVEN.

BY

LOUIS WEPF.  
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CINCINNATI:  
WESTERN METHODIST BOOK CONCERN PRESS.  
1886.



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## TO THE READER.

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ALTHOUGH aware of the prejudices with which treatises of the Revelation of John are looked upon, yet have I written this book. The reasons are:

1. This subject was not my own choice, but was forced upon me by the Lord; yea, my entire life was a school preparing me for this work. Deeper knowledge never came to me by my own invention, but the Lord caused me to see from time to time a light shining in the distance, which showed me the direction in which to work till I received full light. After two years of hard work I just began to see my way clearly through the Revelation, and nineteen years more of continual study and work were consumed before the work was ready for the press.

2. The time has come when the things which God has revealed in the Revelation ought to be understood; we are nearing the last eventful period.

3. Although till now no thorough and satisfactory explanation has appeared, although the Revelation has always been as a sealed book, yet the representation here given will prove itself different. The description of the law of four and seven gives the key which opens to our understanding the Revelation in the order of its contents, as well as in the unfolding and signification of the events contained therein. The arrangement of its contents thus

elucidated, the events and their time given, the explanation of the figures of these events is not harder to understand than the parables of our Lord in the Gospels; for the figures of the Revelation are simply likenesses, presenting events, and the signification of these figures lies in their own nature, but is also given in other texts and places of the Bible. With, on the one hand, the Bible, explaining the signification of its figures, and on the other hand, a sufficient knowledge of Church and world history, any believer may be able to understand the Revelation without a special teacher. He will need only such helps as are given in this work.

4. Though there are a large number of professors who pay little attention to the prophetic word, yet the Lord says in that same word (Dan. xii, 10), "The wise shall understand." For such have I written.

It is evident that in a work of this kind no single translation of the Bible is authoritative, but one must be guided by the original. Therefore, I made use of the three oldest manuscripts extant, and also Tischendorf's *Editio Octava Major*, Vol. II, Leipzig, 1872. Moreover I compared several German translations, as well as the revised American and English editions. If, therefore, the reader should find some expressions different from what he is wont to read, he may rest assured that it is given in the exact sense of the original.

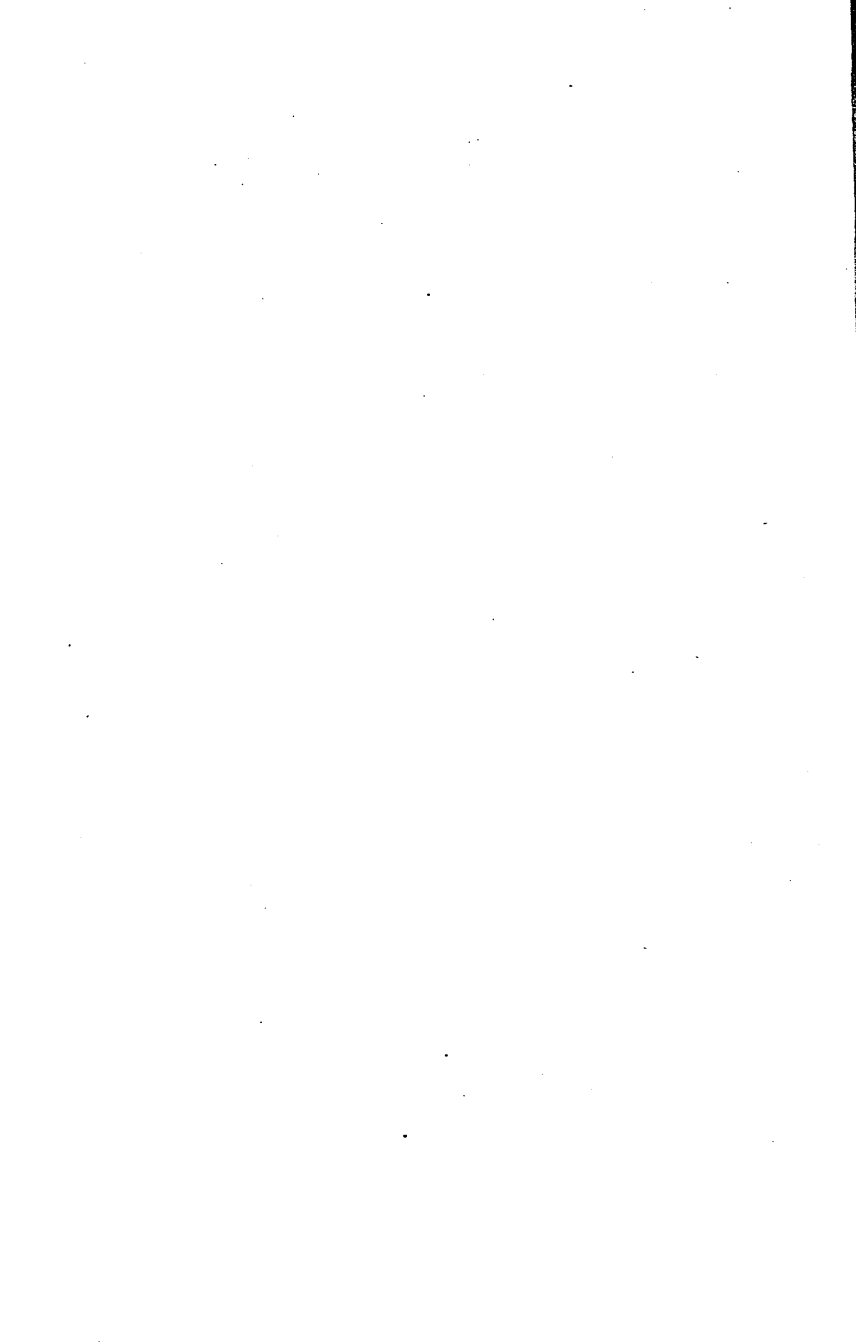
In the treatment of a subject so great and comprehensive, I have tried to present it as condensed as possible, to facilitate the comprehension of the

whole in its connections. Therefore, as a rule, I could give only indications on minor points, as the main points must be made prominent, leaving others issuing from these to the thoughtful consideration of the reader. The subject is by no means exhaustively treated.

Also, to preserve brevity, I noted texts, not absolutely necessary in their contents, simply with a reference, to show where they could be found. Notes, containing further explanations, are annexed at the end of the book.

The logical connection of the contents of this book will not be hard to understand, if each part is carefully studied; for the four parts together form a whole, the same as the four gospels which present the life of Christ and his doctrines. May the Lord open the understanding to his Revelation, and may his blessing rest upon it!

THE AUTHOR.



## INTRODUCTION.

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THE book which is commonly called "The Revelation of John" bears strictly the following title:

"The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show unto his servants the things which must shortly come to pass: and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John; who bare witness of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, of all things that he saw. Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of the prophecy and keep the things which are written therein: for the time is at hand."

THIS TELLS US WHAT THE REVELATION IS.—A revelation of God to Christ, and from Christ communicated by the service of his angel to the apostle and beloved disciple John. It is not a revelation of new doctrines, but of history which must shortly come to pass—*i. e.*, the things which shall happen in the great war between the Church of God and her adversaries: how the former, striving to fulfill her mission, is persecuted and opposed by her adversaries. These things Christ makes known beforehand to those who serve him. He does not express this directly, however, but uses signs and figures. This is what John means by the word "signified." Such a revelation is very important and useful to the people of God; for the Lord calls blessed those who read, hear, and keep the things written therein. The design of the Lord concerning the revelation is thus manifest. He wants us to understand what he has caused to be written therein. The time in which the things thus signified should pass into real history was already at hand when John wrote.

HOW IT CAN BE UNDERSTOOD.—The Scriptures must be explained by the Scriptures. Their declarations must be mutually compared and conceived in harmony with themselves and with the nature of the subject. The Scriptures are the archives of God, describing the origin of this world, of man, and giving us the history of the latter. In this history Christ is the great center around which every thing moves. For this reason the people from which he comes—and all who believe in him—assume next to him the highest position in history. The relative importance of any other people in history appears from its relation to the people of God and in the manner in which it comes in contact with the latter. The Scriptures give us the main facts in the history of man. Thus the Old Testament contains the beginning and the principal events of the past. The New Testament contains the history of the time of Christ and the apostles; while the Revelation represents the principal events of the time from the apostles to the end of the world. Hence the Revelation appears as the close of that history which the Old Testament began and the New continued. This is the relation which the Revelation maintains to the Scriptures, and in which it must be considered in order to be understood. But, again,

ITS EVENTS MUST BE CONSIDERED IN THEIR SIGNIFICATION AS SINGLE PARTS IN THE PLAN OF GOD.—There were wars, famines, and other judgments of God through the whole history of mankind. Hence these are nothing new. To learn to comprehend these events and other formations with them in their signification as single parts in the plan of God, and as the attainment of the purpose which God has in view, this is of importance. The seeming greatness or prominence of an event is not the scale by which its signification is to be measured, but God's purpose in history which at that time is to be obtained. There is system and purpose in the work of God. Every

event, every movement has a purpose, for the hand of God directs all things. Without knowing this purpose, and without understanding the relation of the events to it, history is a mystery. To understand the Revelation there is also indispensably necessary:

#### A KNOWLEDGE OF THE ORDER OF THE EVENTS SIGNIFIED THEREIN.

The Revelation appears to the observer at the first glance not a little confusing. There is indeed a certain order perceivable, and it may be seen that it consists of several parts which by their figures bring the events in regular order before us. Three of these parts follow here in the order of the number seven: by seals, trumpets, and bowls. This order is somewhat known from the history of creation; but the order of the parts as such—*i. e.*, the way in which they make the Revelation a natural harmonious whole, has hitherto remained entirely unknown, an unsolved enigma.

Intelligent men strive to observe the best possible order in every undertaking; how much more may we expect to see this in all God's plans! The works of creation prove this, and hence the Revelation which comes from God must follow in the same systematic way.

THE LAW OF SEVEN AND FOUR.—In looking for something which might be a leading principle in that book, the frequent appearance of the numbers *seven* and *four* can not fail to suggest the idea that this numeric law must have something to do with the order of its contents. To be sure, it is no new feature here, for it is found throughout the Bible; but it reminds us, as in the history of the creation, of its important relation to the things created and ruled by God.

That it is a law of a peculiarly high nature is apparent from the position it assumes in the decalogue—in the commandment to keep the seventh day holy—for



there it is placed nearest those laws which refer to the personality of God, and before those which refer to the duties towards our parents and fellowmen. Again we read<sup>1</sup> that the seven horns and the seven eyes of the Lamb<sup>2</sup> are the seven spirits of God sent forth into all the earth; consequently, even that which in its nature is essentially divine exists and manifests itself according to this law. These are clear evidences that it stands in close relation to the being of God. *Seven* is twice three and one; *four* is once three and one, the number of the Godhead and that of the thing created. Again, it may also be said that *seven* is the repetition of the divine number with *one* added to it. Further, it may be said, *seven* is the repetition of the divine number, and the result of that number. Let us demonstrate this assertion.

Paul says that the invisible things of God since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even his everlasting power and divinity, etc.,<sup>3</sup> in other words: God's seal is plainly impressed on all his works. God's works are a reflector of God. Every thing created or touched by God (which includes the things he governs, and which are thereby formed to answer his purpose, and, in so far, become his work): every one of these bears God's seal. They all proclaim his existence, his power, wisdom, goodness, love, justice, holiness, glory, etc. All the attributes of God shine forth plainly from them. Now as the mirror gives the reflex or image of the thing it reflects, and is thus seemingly repeating or doubling that thing, so likewise does God seemingly appear repeated in his works, because these reflect his being and attributes. Thus we see that the activity of God, be it creating or governing, is in a manner a repetition of the Godhead; and the result of such activity and repetition is the creation. Hence *seven* is the repetition of the divine number and the result

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<sup>1</sup> Rev. v, 6.<sup>2</sup> See note 1.<sup>3</sup> Rom. i, 20.

of that number. It is *twice three* and *one*; the Godhead creating, and the thing created.

THIS LAW HAS ITS ORIGIN IN GOD.—The origin of this law is manifest. It is not something arbitrarily assumed by God, but arises out of the nature of his being. It represents his nature, his activity, and the thing brought forth by his activity. *Three* is the number of the Godhead; *six* represents the Godhead active, and *seven* is the result of the *six* or *three*. From this the position and signification of *four* is obvious: it is similar to *seven*. It is simply the divine number and one, or the Godhead without activity and the creation. *Three* and *six* are corresponding numbers, and so are *four* and *seven*.

THE EXTENT OF THIS LAW.—Now, as God is a Trinity, and as all things created by him bear his impress, or are, so to say, in a lower or higher degree representers of his being, does it not follow that all things created by him must be formed according to this law and be governed by it, nay, that this law must manifest itself everywhere, even in spiritual and heavenly things? That it is a law of a far-reaching, if not of an all-pervading, influence is seen from the fact that it is not only found in the Bible, but also in nature and elsewhere. In music, for instance, are *three*, *four*, and *seven* fundamental things. As *three* (the number of the Godhead) is the only self-existing number, and every other is only in a relative degree a repetition of these *three*: so in music there are only three self-existing tones, which form a unity or harmony, called the chord. The tones themselves are: *do*, *me*, and *sol*, and may be started at any pitch. Any other tone added, is but a repetition of one of these three.

In the sphere of light the same law exists. Here the operation of seven through the sun in its influence upon our world is a self-evident fact. Light is a unit, but it consists of three primary colors: red, yellow, and blue. Out of these arise the seven prismatic colors,

seen through the prism and in the rainbow. In other spheres of nature the existence and power of this law is manifest; for instance, in the effect of cold. Every snow-flake bears the seal of the godhead. The number three shows itself in the innumerable kinds of stars into which each flake is formed. Geology also finds this law, and it doubtless exists, though undiscovered, in many other things. In view of the eminent nature of this law, and its existence in every domain of the visible and invisible world, can it be doubted that the contents and order of events of the Revelation are also regulated by it?

PECULIAR POSITION OF FOUR.—Attentive readers of the Scriptures will find, that as a rule, where a four occurs, be it the first part of a seven, or standing by itself, it will always form a whole by itself. For instance, the first four days of the creation finish our world in every respect, except the beasts and man. So do the first four seals<sup>1</sup> form a whole by themselves, through the four riders who come forth at the opening of the first four seals. In a similar manner the first four trumpets,<sup>2</sup> and the first four parables<sup>3</sup> prove themselves as a certain whole by themselves by a considerable interval between them and the other three following. An exception to this rule is found in the seven Churches of Asia, which are divided first in three and then in four. The first three Churches have the exhortation: "He that hath an ear," etc., first, and the promise last. The other four have that exhortation last and the promise first. Another exception in this line is also

#### THE ORDER OF THE CONTENTS AND EVENTS IN THE REVELATION.

For here comes *first*, THE INTRODUCTION, which contains the addresses of the Lord to the seven Churches

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<sup>1</sup> Rev. vi.    <sup>2</sup> Rev. viii.    <sup>3</sup> Mat. xiii.

in Asia, from Chapter I to the end of Chapter III. Then come the four parts, which describe the history of our period, that is, from the time of the apostles to the next coming of the Lord. Thus:

I. A part from Chapter IV to the end of Chapter VI, describing the delivery of the book to the Lamb, the opening of its seals, and closing with the great day of wrath, or *the next coming of Christ*.

II. A part from Chapter VII to the end of Chapter XI, and closing with *the next coming of Christ* (verse 11-14), quickly followed by the sounding of the seventh angel (verse 15-19).

III. A part from Chapter XII to the end of Chapter XIV, and closing with the harvest of the earth *at Christ's next coming*.

IV. A part from Chapter XV to the end of Chapter XIX, and closing with the destruction of the wicked *at Christ's next coming*.

Following these there comes A PART comprising the whole of Chapter XX, hence describing the time from Christ's next coming, or from the beginning of the millennium, to the passing away of earth and heaven when the final judgment takes place.

Finally comes A PART, comprising Chapters XXI and XXII, speaking of the new heaven and the new earth, and of the happiness of the redeemed.

With these two parts, which form the conclusion of the Revelation, and with the introduction from Chapter I to Chapter III, there are in all SEVEN PARTS, of which the Revelation consists. Those FOUR PARTS which lie between the introduction and the conclusion, contain, so to say, the main history of the Revelation, so far as they chiefly portray "the things which must shortly come to pass," the history of our present period, until the next coming of Christ; hence they appear first for our consideration, and the question now is:

## HOW DO THESE FOUR PARTS TOGETHER CONTAIN THE HISTORY OF OUR PERIOD?

They contain it just as the four gospels contain the history of our Lord Jesus. The gospels, too, are ruled by that same *law of four*. Each evangelist writes differently from the other, yea, they seem even to contradict one another, and yet together they form a beautiful harmony: the glorious song of the salvation of Christ.

How four can make one is seen in the law of music, and hence the law of four here explains itself. Who has not observed how four different voices, singing together the four different parts of a song, form a harmonious whole, a beautiful melody. Just so do the four parts of the Revelation together represent the one history of our period. They take exactly the same position in the representation of our history as the treble, base, alto, and tenor do in a melody. Each is different from the other, but united, they form a wonderful harmony—a whole.

DESCRIPTION OF THESE FOUR PARTS OF MUSIC.—Of the four parts or voices which together form a harmony, there is first in order, beginning below, *the base*. As its name indicates, it is the foundation of any piece of music. Not only is the last note of this voice the keynote of the tune, but every note from first to last is fundamental, so that the base actually puts forth the fundamental tones throughout any piece of music, and thus indicates and expresses in general terms, the character of the tune.

Next is *the alto*. This voice is, so to say, a further development from the foundation upward to the completion of the structure. It is the intermediate voice between the base and the treble. It has some resemblance to the former, however, is still more like the

treble, whose movements, as a rule, it follows at a distance of what is called "a third" lower.

*The treble* assumes among the four parts of music the leading position. It contains the leading tones—the melody. It has the most beautiful and complete form of all. It is that toward which the fundamental tones direct, and what the alto approximately expresses; it is the main part of the structure in full form, being independent of the others, as it exhibits a harmony and beauty complete in itself. This is a quality which no other voice possesses, the object of the others being rather to accompany the treble and form with it a harmonious whole.

Though the treble is beautiful when sung alone, it loses nothing of its beauty, but on the contrary gains much when accompanied by the other voices.

*The tenor*, as intimated, is a dependent voice, depending especially on the treble. It follows this voice as a rule at the same distance above as the alto does below, and constitutes thus the highest of the four voices. Compared with the others it forms the last element for the completion of the whole. It is the closing part or roof of the structure.

As this law of four has such a signification in music, so has it also wherever it appears, and to whatever characteristic it may refer. Thus, in regard to form, we see in the four living beings in the Revelation<sup>1</sup> that the base corresponds to the lion-form (strength, roaring). The alto corresponds to the form of the calf, weaker than the lion, but in its relation nearer to man. The treble corresponds to the human form, the most perfect and beautiful of all. The tenor corresponds with the flying eagle, soaring higher than all others.

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<sup>1</sup> Rev. iv, 6-8.

THE FOUR PARTS OF THE REVELATION IN THE  
LIGHT OF THIS LAW.

Part I begins with Chapter IV and ends with Chapter VI. According to the law of four this part ought to be the base of the Revelation, and it is. It will, however, be observed that Chapters IV and V are a kind of introduction to Chapter VI, which contains the history proper of our period. This history is portrayed by the first six seals. The character of the base of these seals appears, in that they do not give us specific history, but only key-notes, or fundamental traits of it; hence they do not give us figures of six single historical events, but of *six divisions of time of our period*; in a certain sense, a *general survey of the fundamental traits of our history*. The specification is carried out by the other parts.

Part II, to which Chapter VII is the introduction, gives us such specific history, and most of it is carried out at the sounding of the seven trumpets. This part ends with the close of Chapter XI. It is *the alto*, and gives us figures, whose signification is weaker than those in Part I; yet they are physically stronger than any of the following parts.

Part III, from Chapter XII to the end of Chapter XIV, has no introduction and answers to the treble. It contains the most extensive representation of our history. As Luke, whose gospel likewise assumes the position of treble, does not only, like Matthew, trace the descent of our Lord back to Abraham, but to Adam, the first man; so also does the treble of the Revelation trace its history back to the times of the first man. Nor does it present its events in a series of seals, trumpets, bowls, and the like, as the base, alto, and tenor, but every thing here is expressed in the most direct and most developed form of presentation in the narrative, though as the case requires, in figurative style. Its leading

position toward the other parts is manifest, for it brings before us the principal subjects of the whole history. First, *the Church of God* in her glorious phases at the different stages of her gradual progress;<sup>1</sup> then, *Christ*, in his descent according to the flesh;<sup>2</sup> then, the three chief leaders of the adversary's party, *the Dragon*,<sup>3</sup> *the Beast*,<sup>4</sup> and *the False Prophet*;<sup>5</sup> then, *that pre-eminent number and first fruits from among the saved*, those hundred and forty and four thousand, as coming out from the great conflict undefiled and blameless;<sup>6</sup> then, *divine revelations for the last times*;<sup>7</sup> and finally, *the coming of the Lord from heaven*, and the principal events at that coming; *the ingathering of the believers into heaven*, and *the destruction of the wicked*, who are crushed in the great wine-press of the wrath of God.<sup>8</sup>

Part IV, to which Chapter XV is the introduction, contains in Chapter XVI the seven bowls, the seven *last plagues*. Thus it is made the last and highest part, corresponding with *the Tenor*. Moreover as history it represents the course of development of the Church of God from before the Reformation to the last times, giving it a prominence by which it soars above the others. Chapters XVII and XVIII refer to the last times, and chapter XIX speaks of the marriage of the Lamb with the Church, hence of his coming for the Church and for the destruction of the wicked.

#### WITH WHICH PART SHALL WE BEGIN THE EXPLANATION OF OUR HISTORY?

The Base seems here to have the precedence, hence also the right; but according to the nature of music almost every one would prefer to hear first the Treble, which has the real melody, and after that the Base and

<sup>1</sup> Chap. xii, 1.      <sup>2</sup> Verses 2 and 5.

<sup>4</sup> Chap. xiii, 1-10.

<sup>5</sup> Verses 11-18.

<sup>3</sup> Verses 3, 4, 7-17.

<sup>6</sup> Chap. xiv, 1-5.

<sup>7</sup> Verses 6-13.

<sup>8</sup> Verses 14-20.



the other parts separately. This may also be done here, and is, in fact, the manner of explanation required by the nature of our subject. The Treble, in explaining and describing the parties at war in their respective characters, abilities, and relation to each other, gives us just such information as is necessary in order to get a true insight into the conflict itself. Again a history, if it is to be understood at all, must be presented in a regular succession and order of time. Now, as the other three parts begin the presentation of their history from the times of the apostles, while the Treble begins with the beginning of mankind, it is necessary that the Treble be taken before the other parts.

# THE TREBLE

OF THE

## HISTORY OF THE REVELATION,

CONTAINING THE

Chief and Leading Subjects of this History.

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1. THE CHURCH OF GOD, as coming into being and forming four distinct stages or periods.
2. CHRIST, in his descent according to the flesh.
3. The three chief leaders of the adversary party: THE DRAGON, THE BEAST, and THE FALSE PROPHET.
4. THE PRE-EMINENT NUMBER FROM AMONG THE SAVED, the hundred and forty and four thousand.
5. DIVINE REVELATIONS to the men of the last times.
6. THE COMING OF THE LORD FROM HEAVEN to take home his faithful, and to destroy the wicked from the earth.

(From Adam to the coming of the Lord.)

## Explanation of Part III.

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### THE TREBLE OF THE HISTORY OF THE REVELATION.

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THIS part begins with chapter xii, 1: "And a great sign was seen in heaven: a woman arrayed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars." This sign is great, because it represents something very great: the greatest mystery, wherein God manifests himself most gloriously and most wonderfully; for which reason it is worthy to appear in heaven. The signification of this woman may be learned from expressions like "the wife of the Lamb, the bride of the Lamb, the virgin, daughter of Zion." As Paul says, "that I might present you as a pure virgin to Christ."<sup>1</sup> This woman is the Church of God.

This sign is also great, because its figures represent the Church in her different phases, from the first declaration made concerning her to her highest developed state on earth; hence, comprising her whole history. She appears in her threefold light of the sun, moon, and stars—with the sun as the chief and central light—as a new constellation, a spiritual light to enlighten the world;<sup>2</sup> in fact, a glorious and sublime destiny. Consequently when this spiritual sun of salvation was about to dawn on the earth for the first time, there must also have appeared on the eastern horizon, before the sun itself was seen, that which is called *aurora*: the first rays of the sun engendering a bright shining redness, proclaiming therewith the appearing of the sun itself. This is according to na-

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<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. xi, 2.      <sup>2</sup> Matt. iv, 15.

ture and Scripture; hence, thus would this *aurora* be the *first* appearance and the first step of the Church towards coming into being—a glorious figure which very forcibly represents the proclamation or promise of the salvation of God to our first parents, and at the same time makes this promise the first stage of salvation.

The *second* stage of formation of the Church was that peculiar and wonderful organization under Moses, called by the Scriptures “the law,” where the salvation of God was shown forth in external figures, in shadows and reflections of the true light. This stage and appearing is represented by the moon.

The *third* stage of formation of the Church is the gospel dispensation, where the salvation of God appears in reality in the person of Christ, and from him passes over to the Church. For this reason the character of the Church at this stage is represented by the sun.

The *fourth* or next coming stage of formation of the Church will be the highest and most glorious of all. Then she will obtain the victory and receive power from above to rule over the whole earth; hence, she appears in this stage adorned with a starry crown of heavenly light. This whole figure of the Church of God, so wondrous, glorious, and sublime, has, however, already been set forth by the spirit of prophecy in almost the same expressions as in the Revelation, thus: “Who is she that looketh forth as the morning; fair (or beautiful) as the moon; clear as the sun; and terrible as an army with banners?”<sup>1</sup>

As we shall see the Church again under this figure<sup>2</sup> which has hitherto remained an unexplained mystery, a proper consideration of the development of these phases of light will here be in place, a true knowledge of which will explain that mystery. In entering then into this consideration let us first state:

WHAT IS MEANT BY THE CHURCH OF GOD.—What

<sup>1</sup> Song of Solomon vi, 10.

<sup>2</sup> Rev. viii, 12.

is commonly called the Christian Church is, in the New Testament, with one exception,<sup>1</sup> termed the Church of God. In the original or Greek it is termed *ekklesia*, meaning an assembly. In the sense of the Scriptures it designates a collective body of Christians in one place, as, for instance, the Church in Jerusalem, in Corinth, etc. It also designates all believers in Christ in the whole world as a body or building, as Christ says: "And upon this rock I will build my Church,"<sup>2</sup> and to which also the different expressions "house of God, temple of God," etc.,<sup>3</sup> refer. In a general sense the Church of God includes all who shall be saved—all whom God through his Word is calling out of the corruption of sin, and who, through faith in Christ, become partakers of his salvation. This, however, does not mean that they will all be in the same position and possess the same degree of glory.

HER EXISTENCE.—Really as a body she only exists since the time of Christ. That which is said of the Church of the children of Israel in the wilderness to which Stephen refers<sup>4</sup> was only a type of the real Church, but to assume that she had before the time of Christ no existence at all would be as erroneous as it would be to maintain that before the resurrection of Christ no one had been saved. The means to be saved existed before Christ appeared in the flesh. All who believed in Christ as the promised Savior before he appeared in the world became partakers of his salvation as well as those who believe in him since he appeared in the flesh. Christ is the salvation of all who believe in him. The Scriptures declare that the believers under the old covenant should not be made perfect without us;<sup>5</sup> that is, the believers of old should not obtain full salvation without us, but with us in the resurrection from the dead at Christ's next coming. This the Lord also testified to Daniel.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rom. xvi, 18. <sup>2</sup> Matt. xvi, 18. <sup>3</sup> 1 Tim. iii, 15. <sup>4</sup> Acts vii, 38. <sup>5</sup> Heb. xi, 40. <sup>6</sup> Dan. xii, 13.

From this we see that though the Church of God did not exist before Christ in that manner in which she came into existence through him on the day of Pentecost,<sup>1</sup> nevertheless she was, up to that time, constantly in a course of formation. As a seed which sown and lying in the earth germinates and grows unseen until the new plant pierces the ground and becomes visible, so also the Church of God keeps pace with the progress and unfolding of his salvation. This, as we know, existed during the first period of salvation in the promise. Then came from Moses onward the period of the law, which was a tutor unto Christ. The *first* period, then, is the condition where the seed is laid into the ground. The *second* where it is invisibly thriving and growing until it is strong enough to break through the earth covering it. The *third* period is that of the Gospel, where having pierced the ground, the new plant develops itself to full ripeness until it is finally gathered in. Upon this another period follows—the *fourth*—from the millennium to the end of the world. This is the course of salvation, and hence also of the Church of God, which consists of those who in the course of time become partakers of this salvation.

#### FIRST PERIOD OF THE CHURCH.

HER ORIGIN.—As an institution she has her origin in the counsel of God, hence she is herein the Church of God; but the occasion which demanded her origin was sin. If there were no sin there would be no need of salvation, and consequently such an institution as the Church would not have become necessary.

WHENCE THE EVIL?—Evil comes from the creature, and is simply the transgression of a law within which our welfare consists. Every being created is a limited being, and has to keep itself within certain limits or laws; and according to the transgression of these limits, it sooner

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<sup>1</sup> Acts ii.

or later will experience the consequences of the transgression. Every created being endowed with intelligence and a free will can therefore transgress, if it so chooses. Man was originally a being created after the highest and most perfect pattern. He was the image of God. God made him lord over all the earth. A transgression on his part would therefore not only affect him personally, but the whole creation, at whose head he stood as its lord. This came to pass, and the consequence of his transgression is evident to us all. Evil exists. Men and the whole creation are corrupt.

WHY GOD PERMITTED EVIL.—As every creature endowed with a free will may transgress, it is easy to see how God might have hindered man from transgressing, viz., by taking away the free will, or otherwise limiting his abilities. This, however, would have destroyed his true greatness. Moreover God would thus have taken back from a being what he found to be just and good, and what even man himself would not like to give up. Now God did not do this, neither did he allow evil to have its course unhindered, but held it within due limits to make it serve his marvelous purposes; hence, nothing happens without the permission of God, and without a divine purpose. God might easily have prevented the whole work of sin from the beginning. He might, even after Adam and Eve had transgressed, have said: “Thus far shalt thou come, but no farther. Here shall be the end of sin.” But God did no such thing. On the contrary, he gives us plainly to understand, that from this time, so long as it answers his purpose, the conflict between good and evil shall exist, and the serpent with its adherents is here actually acknowledged as a contending party, and a long course of warfare allowed it against the woman and her seed, as God declared:<sup>1</sup> “And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and be-

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<sup>1</sup> Gen. iii, 15.

tween thy seed and her seed ; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." Here we see God has a purpose. Thus, from this time, the conflict begun by Satan continues between the two parties.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS PURPOSE OF GOD.—The true knowledge of this purpose furnishes the key to the understanding of the whole history of mankind from beginning to end. In the origin of the two parties just described we may readily discern the actuating motives of this conflict. We see what each party is striving after and will obtain. The party of the serpent (also called Satan) endeavors to establish the kingdom of sin. The party, at whose head God has placed himself as leader, endeavors to establish the kingdom of righteousness. There is activity in both parties. Each incites the other to activity, hence there is progression, and alternate victory for each. Now as Satan and his adherents are the assailing party, and as Satan's introduction of sin into the world did not induce God immediately to annihilate this work of sin, but to allow its existence, starting a counter-work against it, viz., that of righteousness, so may it also be expected that in the future movements of the opposing party God will act likewise. He will not totally destroy it, but will merely resist it as far as his purpose requires ; thus, we shall see, that as Satan made the first attack in this conflict, so he and his party, as a rule, ever remain the attacking party in the continuance of this conflict. Thus God and the divine party merely resist Satan's party, which is effectually beaten every time. Herein can the purpose of God be plainly perceived, in that which he allows the adversary to do, and what result he himself thereby attains, overcoming that party and putting its attacks to shame.

A CONCISE HISTORY OF THE FIRST PERIOD.—The way in which sin here proceeded is well known ; with giant strides it advanced directly to its proposed aim.



About the divine party we read that the name of the Lord was proclaimed, that there were a few pious men, and, no doubt, some pious women; but the party of sin increased in such a degree, that of a population which must already have numbered some millions, there was but a single family left who stood up for God's cause. Thus we see that God's people had become too weak to hold the enemy within proper limits, and that the intervention of God was necessary to save his work. He did this by bringing the flood over the world, saving only Noah and his family.

THE FIGURE UNDER WHICH PROPHECY REPRESENTS THIS PERIOD.—The Scriptures say: "Who is she that looketh forth as the morning?" Morning here means in the margin the aurora, or dawn. Light appears. However, the sun itself is not visible, but only its light and the brightness its rays cast before it, causing them to shine on the horizon. The aurora is the proclaimer of a new day after night is almost past. So here the promise of salvation is the rising of the light of divine grace. This was not yet the visible appearance of Christ, the Sun of righteousness himself, but only something of his light, the brightness of his rays shining on the morning horizon. It was a proclamation of his future appearance. It was the first divine promise of salvation in the night of sin, hence a proclamation of a great and glorious day of grace. The light of this promise was for the people of this entire period the only ground upon which they could build their faith and hope. That some did build upon it, is seen from their holy walk. For Adam and Eve life without the light of this promise might have been unbearable. After the flood the promise of the seed of the woman was repeated to Abraham as "in thy seed." So to Isaac and Jacob, to each separately, "in thy seed." Hence that light was through this triple confirmation increased, and shone to the end of

this period; and all who believed therein became through it heirs of the promise and partakers of salvation, as they became also partakers of the coming *first* resurrection.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, are they not made perfect (in salvation) without the believers of the new covenant.

This period was a dark day. The great prevalence of sin darkened the sky, so that the face of the promised sun could not be seen. Black, heavy clouds arose, which, forced by their weight, finally poured down their contents in torrents, and overflowed the wicked world. Every ray of light seemed to become extinct. The evening was nearing, and another night without light threatened to cover the world: but the divine party passed safely through the flood, the several remaining hours of that day passed quietly and not entirely in antediluvian darkness, until night fully closed in, beginning a new period, to which God gave its own light.

#### SECOND PERIOD OF THE CHURCH.

The flood did, indeed, sweep away from the earth the party of sin, but not sin itself; hence, though for a long time the divine party could pursue its course free and undisturbed, yet with the increase of the human race there came again gradually a counter-party into existence. Sin, however, does not assume the same bold and daring position as before the flood, but shows itself tamer, more discreet. The terrible judgment of the flood on the wicked seemed to have a good after effect. Men did not soon venture to oppose God by rejecting all religion and every barrier of morality. Still we see that many of them no longer felt easy within the regulations and bounds of the divine party. To walk in faith and communion with God was too strict and burdensome for them, so they moved away from the neighborhood of Noah into the land of Shinar, and there established a social organization of their own, suiting their worldly

<sup>1</sup> Exod. iii, 6; Matt. xxii, 31, 32; Dan. xii, 13.

minds. Against this God manifested his displeasure by confounding their language and calling their city and undertaking *Babel*. Thus we have

THE ORIGIN OF WORLDLY GOVERNMENTS, OR MERE HUMAN INSTITUTIONS IN OPPOSITION TO THE INSTITUTION OF SALVATION.—As soon as men gave up living by faith and sought instead the things of this world (whatever religious forms and moral principles they may have retained) yet their position was nothing less than a rebellion against the institution of salvation set up by God; for they thus set in opposition to God their own opinion—a mere human institution without faith.<sup>1</sup>

During these times the Scripture introduces a man called Nimrod. This name signifies, “We will rebel.” The significance of this term appears moreover in that this man is described as “a mighty one in the earth,” and as the founder of the first of these worldly institutions.<sup>1</sup> The beginning of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar, and extending his influence even into Assyria. It is to be remarked that the establishing of these institutions came from the generation of Ham. Nimrod was a grandson of Ham. So doubtless Egypt was founded by Mizraim, the second son of Ham, as Mizraim in the Biblical name for “Egyptian.” Although in the order of establishing these kingdoms Babylon and Assyria are first named, still it appears from the Bible that Egypt developed itself before Babylon and Assyria, and contained in the times of Moses, from a worldly standpoint, the first people in the world.

#### HOW THE DIVINE PARTY WAS HERE COMPELLED TO ASSUME A NEW POSITION.

Now these worldly institutions of different nations, what are they, considered from the divine point of view? Are they not the adversary party newly organized? Are

<sup>1</sup> Gen. x, 6-13.

they not according to their principles organized unbelief? For unbelief remains unbelief even under the best religious garment, and behind the best forms of secular right and morality. Now, if unbelief is dangerous in a single person, it is all the more so in whole nations, who are founded and organized upon it. The position, then which this worldly adversary party here assumed, was dangerous to the divine party. How easily might these organized powers have suppressed the few single believers! Hence, if the introduction of sin in the first period occasioned the first move in the manifestation expected, according to the actuating motives underlying this conflict, here, in opposition to the new standpoint of the adversary, the divine party would also assume a new position, which it does. The progress of the adversaries has here, on the one hand, assumed such a form that God can permit them to proceed. Their institutions upholding order and executing civil law may be tolerated. On the other hand, this progress also corresponded with what God in the further unfolding of the hitherto only promised salvation intended to do, namely, that he would form a people for himself into an external institution in order to make known through it his holy law, and to express and represent by types the coming salvation. Here we perceive the necessity of a people like Israel, which God called into existence, and trained to answer this purpose. The new position of the divine party then shows us that

ISRAEL AMONG THE NATIONS OF THE WORLD IS MADE THE BEARER OF GOD'S REVELATIONS.—In opposition to the false and merely external religion of the Egyptians and other nations, God gives Israel a religious system, chiefly external, but true and divine, having his holy law as foundation, and containing figures of heavenly things, as well as types of the future plan of salvation. In opposition to those worldly systems of government

God establishes a true one, which any one impartially examining will find to excel the republican system as well as the monarchial, for the theocratic constitution of Israel places God and his holy law high above all things, giving all equal rights, and making all responsible for a faithful execution of the laws. In fact, Israel thus endowed, stood before other nations as a prince of God (even as its name signifies), and through its divine light it put to shame all other institutions. Well could Moses say to Israel of an institution like this: "Keep therefore and do them, for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations which shall hear all these statutes and say: Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people! For what nation is there so great who hath God so nigh unto them as the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon him for? And what nation is there so great that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law which I set before you this day?"

Justly could he exclaim in his song: "Happy art thou, O Israel! Who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency! Yea, thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee (*i. e.*, in the sense of the margin: *even thine enemies shall be compelled to acknowledge thy excellency against their will*); and thou shalt tread upon their high places."<sup>1</sup>

Remembering that this institution occupied the nighttime, and that its feasts and times, even the years, were ruled by the *moon*, that the moon in itself is a dark body, and hence the light which it gives is the reflection of the sunlight, all this makes the moon a significant figure of the Mosaic institution. For most, if not all, that we see in its numerous and beautiful ordinances is only a reflection either of Christ, the true Light, yet to appear in

<sup>1</sup> Deut. iv, 6-8; xxxiii, 29.

future, or of those things which stand in connection with Christ's work of redemption. The external religious ordinances, the sacrifices, the priest in his beautiful attire, the sanctuary in its form and construction with all its costly contents are figures of great realities, which like beautiful moonlight illumine the night from Moses to Christ. The moon gives a clearer light than the aurora, and hence there is here a progress of light. The beauty of this light and institution did not remain unobserved, nor was it lightly treated by the believers of the old covenant. On the contrary, they seemed to have a mysterious presentiment of its deep and glorious significance. They were greatly attracted by it to a contemplation and study of it, as David says: "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple."<sup>1</sup>

### THIRD PERIOD OF THE CHURCH.

*"Clear as the sun."* The divine party is light, and its history is the unfolding of light. First the light of the aurora or dawn, then that of the moon, and now that of the sun. It is light ever increasing and growing clearer.

How the divine party attained the position and character here designated is likewise seen from the preceding progress of the opposite party, which, after being beaten by the divine institution of Israel, began soon to pursue its purpose in another direction. In external religion and state institutions there was nothing left to improve upon. What new move could it now make to oppose the divine party and to excel it? The tendency of the adversary here shows itself in striving after higher light and better knowledge. It leaves external religion and state institutions where they are, and occupies itself with the higher and spiritual wants of man. It considers man as

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<sup>1</sup> Ps. xxvii, 4.

<sup>2</sup>God's offspring, and according to his inner desire after higher and divine things endeavors to improve him and make him Godlike. The principal leaders in this new direction were especially the Greek philosophers, whose ideas at first found resistance, but gradually were generally accepted, and exercised upon Jew and heathen a powerful influence. There was no direct, palpable evil in this theory of spiritual improvement; there was truth in it, but also error. Truth, in that we are beings of high descent and ought to become Godlike, but an error in that we may become like him by our own exertions, without the way and means appointed by God. Here danger again threatened the divine party. The opposite party had again the start in the way of progress, striving to bring about in a mere worldly and therefore false way that which salvation was about to unfold. The plan of God was to unfold his salvation not only through the promise (the aurora) and through the law (the moonlight), but also in its real nature—in the sunlight. Now the adversary had already established instead of the sunlight of God simply the light of reason of the philosophers and poets; and this in such an attractive form, so suiting the human conceptions that men might easily receive it as the whole truth. Indeed, there was truth in it, but not the whole, not that truth of God which is necessary for the salvation of man. Only that sunlight, Christ, who gives divine light and life, is the truth and the salvation. Every thing else is delusion and deceit; hence among its best followers this self-improvement was a mere fancy, while others did not even possess a real determination for it. The whole was only a self-help, an act proceeding from the same principle as the first transgression and introduction of sin—viz.: a choosing of man according to his own mind, and a following of his own way, without regard to the precepts of God and his way.

How far this deceitful theory had spread and blinded

the men of those times is seen in the moral corruption of those who pretended to be the followers of these wise heathen, and who gloried in them. This theory, however, also found ready entrance among all classes of Jews, especially among the scribes and Pharisees. A self-made piety without regard to the precepts of God and his way, great reliance in such piety and glorying in it, was a chief aberration of this people, a sin for which the Lord so frequently and sharply reproved them. Now if under these circumstances the divine party had remained standing in her moonlight position or Mosaic formation, she would most surely, so far as her light was concerned, have been outflanked and put in the shade by the opposite party. For though the latter was pursuing a false course, yet it had many clear and strong truths, taught by its philosophers in regard to the one eternal, immutable, and immaterial God, and in regard to the human soul, etc. Surrounded by such truths the theory of spiritual improvement impressed itself with greater force and authority upon the minds of men as the more perfect and true system. Hence there was imminent danger to the divine party under the Mosaic institution; and we see here

HOW THAT PARTY WAS AGAIN COMPELLED TO ASSUME A NEW POSITION, AND HOW THE LORD DOES IT.—He manifests in opposition to this mere human endeavor his light of truth. Christ the pure and divine sunlight appears. He shows to men the right way toward spiritual improvement, and how to become Godlike. He is the long-expected Sun of righteousness, enlightening all who receive him. Hence his divine light shines forth from all those who receive him into their hearts; they are his Church, and from such a connection with him appear clear as the sun. The clearness of this light is so great that it confounds all the wisdom of the Greeks and other men; nay, the institution of Israel, existing hitherto as the moonlight, is even far excelled and put



in the shade. Every thing in the work of salvation is more or less affected by the clearness of this light of the sun. Even the Ten Commandments appear clearer, for now a man is declared a murderer if he hates his brother, and looking at the other sex with lust is adultery. In the same way the prophecies of the Old Testament, hitherto appearing dark are now clear as the sun. The signification of the sacrifices, of the services in the sanctuary, and of all those beautiful things belonging to the Mosaic institution is clear as the sun. The plan of God with sinful man: God in his love, righteousness, justice, and mercy, all becomes clear as the sun. The Church of God, too, in her relation to Christ her Savior and Head appears clear as the sun. She is here born again according to her inner man. She is here through Christ made a partaker of the divine nature. Thus possessing the spirit and nature of Christ, and being clothed with his light, how could it be otherwise than that she herself also must appear clear as the sun? This is the period of the gospel in which we live, when every one can convince himself of this light of Christ, shining forth from his faithful ones.

#### FOURTH PERIOD OF THE CHURCH.

This lies in the future, and begins with the next coming of the Lord. It will be a greater unfolding of salvation than the previous state, nay, according to the law of four, it will be the highest state of salvation on earth. Its general character may be anticipated from what the adversary party in its present agitations is striving to establish—a state of earthly felicity. Its aim in the present times is no other than what its principles of unbelief and rejection of divine rule implied from the beginning, but now in its last efforts it is shamelessly and openly proclaiming an unbridled, sensual, animal life of enjoyment. This has in our times become the great so-

cial question of the world. And it will reach the highest stage of its development in the antichrist, who will succeed in bringing about a system of happiness which will suit these sensual men, for which he shall be honored as the Christ and the greatest benefactor of the world. This is "the mystery of lawlessness,"<sup>1</sup> which was already at work in the times of Paul, but which is now constantly forcing itself into publicity, and making enormous progress. To the worldly minded licentiousness and lawlessness appear as the highest enjoyment, and these the antichrist will allow them for a short time; but when this antichristian corruption has attained its highest point, then will the Lord suddenly appear from heaven and make an end of the wicked. Here will the adversaries be totally beaten, and, as a party, abolished forever; and what the wicked intended to have, according to their own perverse mind, will be brought about by Christ, according to the divine mind for those remaining on earth; consequently we see here

HOW ANOTHER TRANSFORMATION AND THE FOURTH PERIOD OF THE CHURCH OF GOD BECOMES NECESSARY.—The opposite party on the one hand, but also on the other hand the nature and progress of the Church, demand a new formation. The opposing party, under the antichrist, resolved to annihilate the whole Church of God, and would have accomplished this purpose if the Lord had not intervened; but the Lord appeared to her salvation, and through him the Church gained a great and glorious victory, so that from this time she assumes a position clad with salvation and divine power, and unfolding over the whole earth her dominion of righteousness and peace. Thus, this fourth period, according to the law of four, forms in its relation to the three others the conclusion, and constitutes them into a whole by itself.

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<sup>1</sup> 2 Thess. ii, 7.

## GENERAL CHARACTER OF THIS FOURTH PERIOD.—

When the Lord comes those who are asleep will rise first, and then the living believers will be transformed in a moment, and together with the arisen be carried into the home above.<sup>1</sup> Then will the Lord appear for the destruction of the antichrist and his hosts. However, not all the people then living will be destroyed at this time, for a remnant of Israel and other nations shall be affrighted and give glory to the God of heaven.<sup>2</sup> “They shall call on the name of the Lord, and shall be delivered;”<sup>3</sup> *i. e.*, they shall not die, but remain alive. They shall find grace in the last hour, like the thief on the cross. From these will come the future population of the earth after Christ’s next coming, while those arisen and transformed are with Christ in the heavenly mansions. On earth moreover the return and restitution of Israel to Canaan is taking place.<sup>4</sup> Out of the remnant of all its tribes<sup>5</sup> shall the kingdom be restored to Israel;<sup>6</sup> as James, quoting from the prophet Amos, says: “After these things I will return, and I will build again the tabernacle of David which is fallen; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: that the residue of men may seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord who doeth these things.”<sup>7</sup> This is the time when the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord,<sup>8</sup> and when Israel shall occupy the first position among the nations of the world, exercising dominion over them; *i. e.*, the law and precepts which God gave being then the one rule for all the nations of the earth. “For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted.”<sup>9</sup> “And the remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many nations,

<sup>1</sup> 1 Thess. iv, 15–17.<sup>2</sup> Rev. xi, 13.<sup>3</sup> Joel ii, 32.<sup>4</sup> Ezek. xxxvii, 1–28; Jer. xxxi.<sup>5</sup> Isa. x, 20–23; Jer. iii,

18; 1, 4, 5.

<sup>6</sup> Acts i, 6.<sup>7</sup> Acts xv, 16, 17.<sup>8</sup> Isa. xi;

Dan. vii, 27.

<sup>9</sup> Isa. lx, 12.

as a lion among the beasts of the forest, as a young lion among the flocks of sheep; who, if he go through, both treadeth down and teareth in pieces, and none can deliver."<sup>1</sup> "That the nations shall see and be confounded. . . . They shall lick the dust like a serpent; they shall move out of their holes like worms of the earth; they shall be afraid of the Lord our God, and shall fear because of thee."<sup>2</sup> Such shall be the position which Israel, as the people of God, shall assume on earth before the other nations. This period includes the millennium, where sin is still possible, but will not be tolerated. It will be immediately and severely punished.

The Lord shall be King over all the earth.<sup>3</sup> Christ will not be personally on earth, but in heaven. He shall with his risen and transformed members, who are priests of God, reign from heaven over those living on the earth.<sup>4</sup> The nations on earth shall here be governed by such priests of God,<sup>5</sup> and Israel itself by the Lord and his apostles. "Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."<sup>6</sup> (Judging here must be understood in the sense of the Old Testament, meaning to reign or govern.) This explains to us why this reign of Christ over the earth is described as carried on with a rod of iron.<sup>7</sup>

"TERRIBLE AS AN ARMY WITH BANNERS," is the description of this period. This expression denotes in the margin the position of bearers of banners in an army. Wherever the banner is carried, there also the army follows; wherever it is set up it represents and proclaims the right, authority, and dominion of the nation setting it up. Hence, wherever the banner penetrates

<sup>1</sup> Micah v, 8. <sup>2</sup> Micah vii, 17; Psal. cxlix, 6-9. <sup>3</sup> Zech. xiv, 9; Psal. xcvi. <sup>4</sup> Rev. v, 10. <sup>5</sup> Rev. ii, 26-28. <sup>6</sup> Matt. xix, 28. <sup>7</sup> Psal. ii, 9; Rev. ii, 27; xii, 5; xix, 15.

and establishes itself, it commands subjection, or severe punishment. It is in this respect the sign of victory and terror. Of such a nature shall be the position of the people of God in this fourth period. It shall set up the law and the precepts of God for all nations, demanding their strict observation, and visiting each disobedience with severe punishment. This is reigning with a rod of iron.

By unfolding such power and gaining such a victory this period appears like the crown which the Lord puts upon his glorious work; for this reason the Lord also declares of the people appointed for this purpose: "And thou shalt be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God."<sup>1</sup> This crown, which is as well a sign of power,<sup>2</sup> as of victory,<sup>3</sup> and of glory,<sup>4</sup> has an eminent and more than simple signification. It first designates the eminent, powerful, victorious, and glorious position of the Church of God on earth, during this last, and, no doubt, longest, period of all. Moreover, so far as this wreath of stars surrounds the head of the woman or Church, it designates the position of her real Head—of Christ in heaven—upon the throne of his glory, with his twelve apostles upon thrones around him, directing and governing the Church on earth;<sup>5</sup> hence the figures which represent her, not only point to her existence in this world, but this wreath points even to the Church above, to her Head, Christ, and his apostles.

THESE FOUR PERIODS TOGETHER are a short explanation of the figurative representation of the Church of God in our Part III, or Treble, Rev. xii, 1: "And a great sign was seen in heaven; a woman arrayed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her

<sup>1</sup> Isa. lxii, 3; Zech. ix, 16.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. xxvii, 29; Rev. iv, 4.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. ix, 25; Rev. vi, 2.

<sup>4</sup> 1 Pet. v, 4; 1 Thess. ii, 19.

<sup>5</sup> Matt. xix, 28.

head a crown of twelve stars." In this figure the Church appears according to the Lord's own testimony, as the light of the world.<sup>1</sup> She is for mankind what the sun, the moon, and the stars are for the earth; high above the earth, and yet exercising upon it by her light, warmth, and other powers a mighty influence. In this position she has in part already let her light shine; but will let it shine in full power upon the earth, with the crown of stars upon her head out of the spiritual heaven, in the next or fourth period, from the beginning of the millenium to the final judgment, as it is said: "And didst make them unto our God a kingdom and priests, and they shall reign over the earth;"<sup>2</sup> and "they that are wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever;"<sup>3</sup> and "then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father."<sup>4</sup> In consequence of this the Church on earth will be enabled to shine in the full light of God.

REMARK.—These four stages of formation of the Church are, as will be perceived, not the only steps she made in her onward movement, but they are *four main steps*. The progress of both parties goes on gradually. Each party incites the other; however, as the adversary party made the first move it remains the principal mover for the formation of these four periods, till it is forever cut off at the coming of our Lord.

Rev. xii, 2, further states: "And she was with child; and she crieth out, travailing in birth, and in pain to be delivered." This is the presentation of the history of the woman of another time, and in another relation. These words point to the fullness of the time when Israel, after having long ago received the promise of a Savior to come from her midst, filled with intense hope, now feels that the time of his birth is near, and, therefore, incessantly

<sup>1</sup> Matt. v, 14. <sup>2</sup> Rev. v, 10. <sup>3</sup> Dan. xii, 3. <sup>4</sup> Matt. xiii, 43.

cries out to God for the fulfillment of his promise, as is reported of Simeon and Anna,<sup>1</sup> and as Paul mentions the twelve tribes in general.<sup>2</sup> Hence, here the history of the time of Christ is introduced, and his relation to the woman in his descent according to the flesh shown. After having in verse 1 presented the whole development of the woman in its leading traits, there comes now a presentation of her peculiar relation to Christ, and with it is closely connected a representation of her chief adversary, called

### THE DRAGON.

VERSE 3: "And there was seen another sign in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his heads seven diadems."

Here not the sign is called great, but the dragon himself is by this expression designated as something extraordinary—an adversary of a most horrible nature. Who this dragon is, is explained in verse 9, viz., the old serpent, he that is called the Devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world. Of the time of his creation the Scriptures make no precise statement. Yet so much may be plainly perceived from them, that he was created before man, for he was present and determined to ruin man just created. There were spiritual beings, not only before the creation of man, but even before the foundation of the earth; for when God laid its foundations, the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy.<sup>3</sup> That he was originally created good, there can be no doubt, but he sinned from the beginning;<sup>4</sup> and as sin corrupted man it must also have corrupted Satan's original condition. From this may be explained his fiery red appearance, indicating excitement and wrath, as also his form—that of a dragon<sup>5</sup>—with

<sup>1</sup> Luke ii, 25-38.    <sup>2</sup> Acts xxvi, 7.    <sup>3</sup> Job xxxviii, 4-7.  
<sup>4</sup> 1 John iii, 8.    <sup>5</sup> See note 2.

seven heads and ten horns. Of course, he has not outwardly this horrible beastly form, but his inner character assumed this form through sin. Christ, we know, called Herod a fox, and the Pharisees a generation of vipers and serpents, though they had not outwardly these beastly forms; hence, it is sin that changed this original angel into such a monster, as it still to-day transforms men, originally created in the image of God, into monsters. Sin changes every good into evil, according to the degree in which a creature commits sin. The good traits of character which in him are expressed by the divine and creaturely number, viz., twice *three* and *one*, that is *seven*; and three times *three* and *one*, that is *ten* (the fingers?) were transformed in Satan into monstrous traits. So his princely dignity, expressed by the seven diadems<sup>1</sup> on his seven heads, and given to him for a good purpose is manifestly used to obtain bad ends. He is a crowned dragon, and makes use of his princely position.

From this position may be seen his influence:

VERSE 4: "And his tail draweth the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth."

Stars signify angels. This is our Lord's own explanation.<sup>2</sup> Thus a third part of the angels of heaven are induced by his machinations to follow him and take his part. As his crown indicates, he is not alone, but great and powerful hosts of angels or spirits are connected with him. A movement with the least part of his body draws the spiritual hosts after him, and he casts them to the earth. There will be the special scene of their activity. This is a very important fact, one that is generally by professed Christians of our time but little considered, if not entirely ignored.

Not a small number seem to stand on Sadducean ground. That in the great conflict of this world mighty

<sup>1</sup>See note 3.    <sup>2</sup>Rev. i, 20.



and influential hosts of evil spirits are constantly active under the leadership of Satan; that they form the background and principal motive power is scarcely thought of by many, and hence still less known and believed; and yet it is a fact, as Paul plainly testifies: <sup>1</sup> "For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places." Again does Paul call Satan, "the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the sons of disobedience."<sup>2</sup> So when our Lord calls Satan "the prince of this world,"<sup>3</sup> it refers to the same fact. However, this designation has a still deeper signification, the explanation of which is here not absolutely necessary.

"And the dragon stood before the woman which was about to be delivered, that when she was delivered, he might devour her child." (Verse 4.)

This is the continuation of the history begun in verse 2. After the dragon has been introduced and described, he is shown in his opposition to Christ. The two chief leaders of the parties at war—the two great opponents—appear now on the scene. The child, which the woman was about to bring forth, is Christ. According to the flesh, he comes from Israel. As he is David's Lord, but also David's Son, so is he also a son of the people of Israel, as also its Lord and Savior. Our text furnishes us an example of the manner in which the dragon actually exercises his activity. For what is here said of him, he has not directly done himself; it was Herod that did it, using all his slyness and power to destroy the child Jesus. To this end the dragon, as the old serpent, suggested the first thought, as by Eve; Satan's other subservient spirits, too, may not have been inactive, and all was just what Herod desired.

<sup>1</sup> Eph. vi, 12.

<sup>2</sup> Eph. ii.

<sup>3</sup> John xiv, 30; xvi, 11.

VERSE 5: "And she was delivered of a son, a man-child, who is to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God and his throne."

This is history concisely stated. The birth of Christ is mentioned, and his future dominion with a rod of iron over all nations on earth especially set forth, and then the return to the throne of his Father declared. His stay and work during thirty three years on earth is passed over, because it did not conduce to the salvation of Israel as a nation, for only a few believed. Hence their history as is here omitted, and only the history of the few believers, the real people of God, is given.

VERSE 6: "And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that there they may nourish her a thousand two hundred and three score days."

This flight is the dispersion of Israel at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem in the year 70 A. D. Canaan is the home of the Israelites, solemnly promised and given to them by God. If any Israelites had a right to dwell there, it was they who were believers; but even this part of Israel, who here essentially constitute the woman, had at the time here indicated to leave that home and flee into the wilderness. This was God's kind providence. He has in the wilderness—of this world—prepared a place for her, and takes further care that she be nourished there during a time expressed by the highest number, viz., a thousand two hundred and three score days, in other passages also expressed as forty and two months, and a time, times, and half a time. This wilderness into which Israel fled and is now scattered, are the "nations," as the Lord says: "And I will bring you into the wilderness of the peoples,<sup>1</sup> and there I will plead with you face to face."

<sup>1</sup> "Peoples" in the margin, Ezek. xx, 35; xi, 16. Comp. Psa. xc, 1; xci, 9. Isa. viii, 14.

VERSE 7-9: "And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels going forth to war with the dragon; and the dragon warred and his angels; and they prevailed not, neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, the old serpent, he that is called the Devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world; he was cast down to the earth, and his angels were cast down with him."

From these testimonies we learn: 1. That Satan with his angels had until a certain time had access to heaven; 2. That there must have been sufficient ground to grant him that access; 3. But that there must also have been sufficient ground for which he could, as here stated, be cast out. As this chapter states the events in the regular order of time, this war in heaven must have occurred at a later time than the destruction of Jerusalem, or the flight of the woman. The more specific time of this event is indicated by

VERSE 10-12: "And I heard a great voice in heaven saying: Now is come the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Christ; for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accuseth them before our God day and night. And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb, and because of the word of their testimony; and they loved not their life even unto death. Therefore, rejoice, O heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe for the earth and for the sea, because the devil is gone down unto you, having great wrath, knowing that he hath but a short time."

Every thing said in these verses points evidently to the last times. For instance, the words, "Now is come the salvation and the power," etc., say essentially the same thing which is said at the sounding of the seventh trumpet; then also great voices say in heaven: "The kingdom of the world is become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ," etc.;<sup>1</sup> and the words, "Because the devil is gone down unto you, having great wrath,

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<sup>1</sup> Rev. xi, 15-18.

knowing that he hath but a short time," point likewise to the very last time, where the antichrist will be revealed, he, whose coming is according to the working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders; consequently the time when Satan will unfold his greatest activity. Every thing said in these verses is plain truth, spoken without figure, and for this reason understood without further explanation to designate the last time. The following descriptions of this chapter refer to the same time.

VERSES 13, 14: "And when the dragon saw that he was cast down to the earth, he persecuted the woman, which brought forth the man-child. And there were given to the woman the two wings of the great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness unto her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time from the face of the serpent."

The dragon cast to the earth now employs his whole time and power for the things on earth, and his anger is especially directed toward the woman or Church; but the latter perceiving the signs of the time, flees from her place of abode hitherto occupied into the wilderness. To accomplish this, the Lord comes to her aid. The two wings of the great eagle given her are manifestly the Lord's, as he formerly said to Israel: "Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagle's wings, and brought you unto myself."<sup>1</sup> As the Lord saved Israel from the power of the Egyptians and carried her into the wilderness, so will he also save his people from the terrible fury raging in the kingdom of the dragon and of the antichrist, and bring them into the wilderness to the place prepared by him. No doubt, America is the wilderness here indicated as the place prepared by God. The hand of divine Providence has been visibly directing things to that effect in the past and

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<sup>1</sup> Ex. xix, 4.

the present. Why should it not also in the future? As the United States of America have, as a nation, made the eagle their national emblem, it would, in another aspect, not be out of the way to regard this nation as the great eagle, lending its two wings of *wind* and *steam* to that woman fleeing from the face of the serpent; hence this flight is compared with the one in verse 6, another occurring much later and lasting a much shorter time—viz.: a time, times, and half a time.

VERSES 15, 16: "And the serpent cast out of his mouth after the woman water as a river, that he might cause her to be carried away by the stream. And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth and swallowed up the river which the dragon cast out of his mouth."

The water which the dragon casts as a river after the woman signifies here, as with the psalmist,<sup>1</sup> all kinds of threatening evils; but the distance which separates the woman from the position of the dragon is too great to allow him to injure her. This river does not reach her, but is swallowed up by the earth; a proof that this wilderness lies a very great distance from the chief scene of action of the dragon.

VERSE 17: "And the dragon waxed wroth with the woman, and went away to make war with the rest of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and hold the testimony of Jesus: and he stood upon the sand of the sea."

It is possible that not all belonging to the woman will flee into the wilderness. It is also possible that the testimony of the Word of God which those who fled left behind them will bring forth new witnesses for Christ. In any case, there will be found seed of the woman remaining in her former locality. There will still be some, who, in spite of the anti-Christian corruption and tyranny, will not be afraid to keep the commandments of

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<sup>1</sup> Ps. lxxix, 2-16.

God and to testify of Jesus; and against these the dragon will then direct his wrath. His standing upon the sand of the sea, when John last saw him here, is a very significant position. Other specifications of these last times will make it clear.

### THE BEAST.

REV. XIII, 1-4: "And I saw a beast coming up out of the sea, having ten horns and seven heads, and upon his horns ten diadems, and upon his heads names of blasphemy. And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power and his throne and his great authority. And I saw one of his heads as though it had been smitten unto death; and his death-stroke was healed: and the whole earth wondered after the beast; and they worshiped the dragon, because he gave his authority unto the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying: Who is like unto the beast? and who is able to war with him?"

Here is a description of another chief leader of the adversary party very much resembling the dragon. The beast, too, has ten horns and seven heads, but instead of having his diadems upon his heads, has them upon his horns; these have here the preference. Again the beast is also red, but scarlet-red;<sup>1</sup> and is, further, in ability, position, and influence, very much like the dragon: it is able to make use of the latter's power, throne, and great authority; and is considered by the whole earth with astonishment: "Who is like unto the beast? and who is able to war with him?" Because the dragon is giving such power to the beast, men worship the dragon and the beast.

WHAT IT IS ACCORDING TO ITS EXTERNAL CHARACTER.—Admitting the explanation of the Revelation that waters signify peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues,<sup>2</sup> the origin of the beast is explained. As aris-

<sup>1</sup> Rev. xvii, 3.    <sup>2</sup> Chap. xvii, 15.

ing out of the sea, it consists of peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues.

The next fact which leads us to a correct understanding of this monster is found in his ten horns. In the well-known prophecy of Daniel,<sup>1</sup> where the four main monarchies from Babylon to the end of our dispensation are represented, Rome forms the fourth monarchy which later divides itself into ten independent kingdoms, called "horns," which appear on the beast with diadems, the sign of royal dignity. That these horns in Daniel and in the Revelation are the same, no one will question; nor will any one contradict the fact that horns grow out of the head, and that hence the head, out of which the ten horns grew, is the Roman Empire; but these facts lead us to the consequent conclusion that the Roman Empire must form a head on the beast. Further, if this head and its horns on the beast represent worldly powers, then it leads to the natural supposition that the other heads have the same signification—*i. e.*, they also represent worldly powers. It might, then, be accepted that the beast is a composition of many beasts which represent worldly powers, of which those of former times were fallen, one was existing in John's time, and one was yet to come in the future.

THIS ACCEPTATION IS BY A CLOSER CONSIDERATION OF THE BEAST CONFIRMED.—We find that it has the characteristics not only of one beast, but of many: of a leopard, a bear, and a lion. It looked in general like a leopard, but had the feet of a bear and the mouth of a lion. If we refer to Daniel, where the chief worldly powers are prefigured, from Daniel to the end of our dispensation, we find that besides Rome, the fourth beast, Greece, the third, is represented by a leopard; Persia, the second, by a bear; and Babylon, the first, by a lion. Thus the beast of our text possesses not only the charac-

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<sup>1</sup> Dan. ii, 32-44; vii, 3-24.

teristics of Daniel's fourth beast—its ten horns—but also those of the three others preceding Rome.

THE SEVEN HEADS OF THE BEAST.—We proceeded by inference from the horns to the heads of the beast. Of these heads it is said that they signify kings, of which up to John's time *five* were fallen, one (the sixth) existed, and the seventh was not yet come.<sup>1</sup> Now, since Rome, Greece, Persia, and Babylon constitute as chief worldly powers four heads on the beast, and Rome existed in the time of John, we would have before us, proved by the Scripture itself, three of the heads fallen. Where, then, may the other two fallen ones be? Nowhere else than in the times preceding these three. Have we here further Scriptural hints? We have. Daniel says of the bear, representing Persia, that it had in its mouth, between its teeth, three ribs.<sup>2</sup> From this, so much may be inferred that if a whole beast signifies a worldly power, a rib may signify a part of such a power. At least we get the irresistible impression from this figure and from the added prophetic command: "Arise, devour much flesh!" that this bear must indeed have devoured much of such animal flesh, and that the three ribs in his mouth point to a remainder of three, of which Babylon must be one, and the other two could not well be any but Assyria and Egypt, they being not only two great worldly powers, preceding Babylon and Persia, but they were actually devoured by the Persian bear.

The five heads fallen are then Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Persia, and Greece. Rome was the head, of which it could be said in the time of John, it is; the seventh is yet to come, and will be the antichrist; the fulfillment of the preceding six, in which also the beast is judged. According to the order beginning with Egypt, Rome is the sixth head. It is also the one as though it had been smitten to death, and whose death stroke was healed.

<sup>1</sup> Rev. xvii, 10.    <sup>2</sup> Dan. vii, 5.



The Roman Empire was overthrown in the year 476, through war, but it was renewed by Charlemagne in the year 800, and existed until 1806, when it was again abolished by Napoleon.

THE BEAST AS A WHOLE is a representation of all the worldly powers as a joint organization, beginning at Babel, first gaining prominence in Egypt, and to be abolished at Christ's next coming. It represents this worldly organization in its development, character, and bearing, in opposition to the development of the divine kingdom on earth. It shows us the special worldly powers of their times, which directly come in contact with the divine kingdom, hindering or furthering the latter's course. For this reason are its heads called "kings" (not kingdoms), because they, of all other worldly powers of their times, occupied the first or leading position in the course of development of the divine plan. This title "king" has, therefore, the signification of representation; for as such kings they represent the whole worldly organization of their time. In this sense the beast itself is a representation of the whole world in its natural and worldly pursuit. It is a corporation, consisting of all the unbelievers who seek only the things of this world—mere animal gratification.

From this it plainly appears, that each fallen head of the beast, as long as it existed, represented the worldly organization of its time. Since in our own times, not only five, but six of them are fallen, it follows, that the ten horns which grew out of the sixth head, must now have become independent powers; that they—the ten nationalities formerly constituting the Roman Empire—are now the powers or kings representing the worldly organization of our time; that they—the ten horns of the beast—wear now the diadems, the sign of royal power; and they will remain in this position until the arising of the beast from the bottomless pit and the appearing of

the antichrist, when they will form themselves into a unit; into *one* king, *one* head, and *one* horn.<sup>1</sup>

NAMES OF BLASPHEMY.—Knowing then who these heads were, we may now easily explain the names of blasphemy appearing on them. These were evidently the high and blasphemous titles which they assumed—titles or names which belong only to God, and not to such unworthy beings as most of these kings were.

ORIGIN AND PURPOSE OF THE WORLDLY POWERS IN THE LIGHT OF HOLY WRIT.—It must clearly appear to every believer, that, if man had remained true to his original destiny, or if even after his fall he had followed the assigned way of salvation—of faith in God's promise—such an institution or establishment of force, as every worldly power is, would never have been needed. The observance of the divine rule of salvation not only brings us again into the right position toward God, but also toward our fellow-men, and thus answers perfectly both these relations of the destiny of our life. Only for this reason, because a vast majority of men would not observe the divine rule of salvation, did such a worldly institution or establishment of force become necessary among that majority, in order to protect their own existence and external rights among themselves from the destructive evil in their midst.

The cause which brought about these worldly institutions is thus obvious: it is unbelief, or the rejection of the divine rule of salvation. In this light they appear not only superfluous, but directly in opposition to the divine rule of salvation; hence, in the true sense, anti-divine. Understand us aright. We do not say that the worldly institutions are in their purpose anti-divine. No, their purpose is good; the Scripture also acknowledges it as such, and admonishes even the believers to honor these institutions, and to pray for its servants; but

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<sup>1</sup> Rev. xvii, 10-13; Dan. xi, 36; vii, 8, 20. Also see note.

their purpose lies evidently in the divine institution of salvation, which causes the inner man to be in harmony with his Maker, and emanating from this, also his outer life. More than this, it will not be contradicted by any believer that the observance of the divine rule would much better have accomplished all that which the worldly institutions intend to accomplish. From this is seen that the existence of the worldly institutions is not even justified by the manner in which they accomplish their purpose, but merely in their intention of satisfying this purpose; for their administration of justice is very often the most miserable bungle and increase of unrighteousness.

The only ground then, from which the existence of worldly powers can be justified, is their intended purpose. If they effect it they thereby hold, in some degree at least, the immense number of worldly minded people in check. They protect these and the small number of followers of the divine rule of salvation from total destruction. For this reason God grants these worldly powers toleration. For this reason does he also call them in so far his servants. So long as the great majority in the world refuse to accept God's rule of salvation, so long will these worldly powers be a necessary evil, setting bounds to a greater and more dangerous evil, and preventing general ruin. When the time comes, when all shall know the Lord and serve him, then will the course of the beast have an end, and God's rule and kingdom be the only rule for all the earth.

The chief point of view from which all movements and formations in the history of man ought to be considered is this: The divine rule is the only true rule, binding for all men and answering perfectly their spiritual and external destiny. Every thing claiming a position beside it is in opposition to this divine rule. All worldly institutions, all religious institutions, so far as

they deviate from the divine rule, are in opposition to it. They all, with their supporters, are doomed to fall, and must fall; that stone<sup>1</sup> shall break them to pieces and become itself an institution filling the whole earth.<sup>2</sup>

From the nature of these institutions or powers we also perceive why they are called beasts. They confine themselves only to the animal and earthly and leave the higher, the spiritual, and the divine. Whoever does this, whoever pushes the spiritual and divine from him, great as his intellect, his knowledge and endeavors may be, and good natured as he otherwise may appear, he remains at best only a gifted and good natured animal. The same rule applies also to a whole corporation of such men; hence a more comprehensive, concise, and in every respect more suitable figure than this could not have been given to designate this class of men; but it is also the selection of divine wisdom.

THE GREAT CONTRAST BETWEEN THIS COMBINED WORLD—ORGANIZATION AND THE DIVINE ORGANIZATION—or in simpler terms, between the world and the kingdom of God, is expressed in their figurative representation. The world is a combination of many wild beasts into a *fearful monster*, but the kingdom of God is *the image of God*—a woman arrayed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars. It is well to remark that the beast, too, is represented as a woman: ἡ παρδαλις, a female leopard. Hence it is the opposite with corresponding relations, as the antichrist is the opposite of Christ, though at the same time presenting himself as “the Christ.” So also the beast is an organization trying to set itself into the place of the Church of God.

THE SOUL OF THE BEAST.—We have explained the body of the beast, but said nothing of his soul. A beast has also a soul, and so has the one under consideration.

<sup>1</sup> Luke xx, 18.

<sup>2</sup> Dan. ii, 34, 35, 44; vii, 26, 27.

The angel said to John :<sup>1</sup> "And the beast that was and is not, is (in regard to the seven kings) himself also an eighth, and is of the seven ; and he goeth into perdition ;" and "the beast that thou sawest was, and is not, and is about to come up out of the abyss, and to go into perdition." Here the body of the beast can not be meant, but that which in future shall animate the body ; a spirit or a soul, which for the full development of the beast's nature in the last time, shall arise out of the abyss and animate the beast in its last or seventh head ; but after a short time will go into perdition, *i. e.*, will be cast into the lake of fire that burneth with brimstone.<sup>2</sup>

What this soul is can not be difficult to determine, considering all the circumstances. The beast stands in such close connection to the dragon, and resembles the latter so much in every respect, that in comparison it differs from the dragon only in being of a little inferior rank. This brings us to the conclusion that the beast, according to its soul, is a being similar to the dragon, a personal being, a demon, which in his relation to the dragon assumes the next rank. Of the many reasons from which this appears, we only refer to the following :

1. The devil in his work as an adversary is not alone, but has a large number of helpers of his own kind, called angels, who are organized into divisions, and under certain heads.<sup>3</sup>

2. The place from which, at a still future time, this soul of the beast shall come : *out of the abyss*. What is the abyss ? It is the place where evil spirits or angels are kept in a kind of prison for a certain time, or even until judgment. A proof of this are those evil spirits<sup>4</sup> who entreated the Lord that he would not command them to depart into the abyss. They were afraid of this place, and felt guilty enough to know that the Lord

<sup>1</sup> Rev. xvii, 11, 8.    <sup>2</sup> Rev. xix, 20.    <sup>3</sup> Eph. vi, 12 ; ii, 2.  
<sup>4</sup> Luke viii, 31.

might justly send them thither. Again, we are plainly told that at the next coming of Christ Satan himself shall be cast into this place for a thousand years.<sup>1</sup> It is also very probable that those angels who sinned are kept in the same place.<sup>2</sup> It is quite certain that out of the abyss came that angel called Abaddon and Apollyon, the king and chief leader of the Mohammedan devastation. If now God's Word declares that the eighth king or the soul of the beast shall come from the very same place, what kind of a being must this soul of the beast be? Further, if those demons and Satan himself are cast into the abyss on account of sin, might not this in some measure explain why that demon, the soul of the beast, was once cast into it, namely, on account of sin on his part? Moreover, if he was cast into the abyss from which he shall in future be released and come again upon the earth, does this not explain that peculiar declaration about him, "The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and is about to come up out of the abyss and to go into perdition. And they that dwell on the earth shall wonder . . . when they behold the beast, (how) that he was, and is not, and shall be present."<sup>3</sup> Is this not a short history of him, saying, that he *was* once before on earth, but now *is not* here, but in the abyss, from which he shall ascend and *be present* on earth again for a short time, and then go into perdition?

3. In Rev. xvi, 13, where the last conflict is carried on in all earnestness, it is said that out of the mouth of the dragon and out of the mouth of the beast and out of the mouth of the false prophet there were coming unclean spirits, which are called spirits of devils or demons. What difference, then, is there between the dragon and the beast, if the one as well as the other brings forth devils?

4. The final judgment of the beast. It is repeatedly

<sup>1</sup> Rev. xx, 1-8.

<sup>2</sup> 2 Pet. ii, 4.

<sup>3</sup> Rev. xvii, 8.

declared that not long after the beast has come up out of the abyss on the earth he shall go into perdition—*i. e.*, the place of damnation, and his judgment is clearly described: <sup>1</sup> “And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet; . . . they twain were cast alive into the lake of fire that burneth with brimstone.” Mark well: the beast is here especially described as a living being. On what else except on living, personal, and responsible beings can such judgment be executed? On the dragon himself a thousand years later the same judgment is executed.<sup>2</sup> A short statement concerning the soul of the beast would amount to about this: the beast as a body and as a party, described by the Revelation, will a short time before Christ’s coming be possessed by a great evil spirit from the abyss. For this reason his behavior during this time will be that of a being possessed by a mighty devil. This demoniacal possession, however, will not befall the body of the beast against his will, but in harmony with the mind of the men that constitute this body.

REV. XIII, 5, 6: “And there was given to him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and there was given to him authority to continue forty and two months. And he opened his mouth for blasphemies against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, even them that dwell in the heaven.”

“Given” has also the signification of “permitted.” God did not give him a mouth to blaspheme. Daniel says: <sup>3</sup> “And behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things.” Again, calling this horn a king, he says: “And he shall speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time.” This explains

<sup>1</sup> Rev. xix, 20.

<sup>2</sup> Chap. xx, 10.

<sup>3</sup> Dan. vii, 8, 25.

what John says. The little horn or the last king on the beast will go so far in his opposition to God that he will blaspheme God, and purpose to abolish all the divine laws and institutions, and establish others in their stead. This adversary will exalt himself against all that is called God, or that is worshiped; so that he sitteth in the temple of God, setting himself forth as God.<sup>1</sup> These are some of the great things which he says and does. The forty and two months designate a longer term of his activity; while "a time and times and the dividing of time" is the shortest, and refers especially to *the three days and a half*, or the last half of the seventieth week of Daniel, where the rage of the beast under the antichrist culminates.<sup>2</sup> Blasphemies and utterances here referred to by John have already been heard from infidels in the past and in our times. The spirit of the beast increases in boldness. Yet the general and complete fulfillment of these things is still in the future, though not very far off.

VERSE 7: "And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and there was given to him authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation."

Here is a clear and positive declaration concerning the followers of Jesus of that time within the dominion of the antichrist: they shall be overcome by him. "The beast that cometh up out of the abyss shall make war with them, and overcome them, *and kill them.*"<sup>3</sup> Only in the wilderness will the followers of Jesus exist as Churches. The power or authority of the last head of the beast—as the psalmist asserts—will at that time extend over many countries;<sup>4</sup> and our text says the same.

VERSE 8: "And all that dwell on the earth shall worship him, every one whose name hath not been written in the book of life of the Lamb that hath been slain from the foundation of the world."

<sup>1</sup> 2 Thess. ii, 4.    <sup>2</sup> Dan. ix, 27.    <sup>3</sup> Rev. xi, 7.    <sup>4</sup> Ps. cx, 6.



The beast will have not only far-extending authority, but men shall do him divine honor: they shall worship him. They will acknowledge his system and arrangement as divine, and reject the law of God. "Worship," indeed, often signifies in the Old Testament the respect and homage shown to men; but it signifies also the real adoration of God. Worship to the beast even in the first sense is sin, because it implies an acknowledgment of his dominion, and becomes real adoration in that the beast puts himself in the place of God. Even verse four speaks of worship; but it is there expressed in the past, while here it refers to the future.

It is evidently said as a warning to the believers, by stating who those are who will worship him here: "All that dwell on the earth, every one whose name hath not been written in the book of life," etc. This is the time when that demon shall have come up out of the abyss and shall domineer over the body of the beast, of which it is also testified:<sup>1</sup> "And they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, they whose names have not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast how that he was, and is not, *and shall be present.*" The presence of this demon on earth causes a time of great violence, unrighteousness, and deception,<sup>2</sup> by his doings under the co-operation of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders, and with all deceit of unrighteousness. With regard to such circumstances are the following words spoken:

VERSES 9, 10: "If any one hath an ear, let him hear. If any one is for captivity, into captivity he goeth; if any to be killed with the sword, with the sword he must be killed. Here is the steadfastness and the faith of the saints."

There is on the one hand a certain mysterious meaning hidden in these words, while on the other hand it

<sup>1</sup> Rev. xvii, 8.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. xxiv, 9-13.

seems clear enough. All this is spoken to the believers. This is the time when their faithfulness to Christ will stand the severest test.

### THE FALSE PROPHET.

REV. XIII, 11: "And I saw another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like unto a lamb, and he spake as a dragon."

Here is a third chief leader of the adversary party, who therefore forms with the dragon and the beast a Satanic trio. We shall call him "the false prophet," because this term designates his true character and real activity; he appears also oftener under this name in the Revelation than under the name "another beast." He is called "another beast" only in this chapter; hence he is also a beast, but another compared with the one just described. Besides this he is called the false prophet.<sup>1</sup> This adversary arises not out of the sea, has not therein his origin; but the earth is the element from which he arises. He that is of the earth speaketh of the earth. Here, then, is the opposite of that which cometh from above, designated as earthly, sensual, and devilish.<sup>2</sup> Even his external appearance corresponds to the nature of a false prophet—i. e., his horns are those of a lamb, while his speech is that of a dragon. Here, then, we have not only a wolf in sheep's clothing, but a demon in the form of a lamb.

VERSE 12: "And he exerciseth all the authority of the first beast in his sight. And he maketh the earth and them that dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose death-stroke was healed."

This shows, 1. That the false prophet, or the other beast, possesses the same ability as the first beast, for he exerciseth all the authority of this first beast; 2. It shows that he exerciseth this authority in the same

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<sup>1</sup> Rev. xvi, 13; xix, 20; xx, 10.    <sup>2</sup> James iii, 15.

locality, and at the same time with the first beast, that is, in the presence of the latter; and, 3. That he exerciseth this authority in agreement with the first beast, and to the furtherance of his purpose, by making the inhabitants of the earth to worship the first beast, that is, to become his most devoted subjects. As the first beast exercises the authority, throne, and great power of the dragon, the close connection of these three beings to one purpose is obvious. The dragon, the beast, and the false prophet form a unit, a whole. They are the three mightiest personalities in the adversary party. It can then no longer be a mystery to the reader who this other beast or the false prophet is, namely, a demon of the same kind, as the first beast and the dragon; a personal being, who in the conflict of this world plays his own peculiar part, by furthering lawlessness under the pretense of piety, as is the manner of false prophets to further sin under the form of religion. This is also shown by the following descriptions:

VERSES 13, 14: "And he doeth great signs, that he should even make fire to come down out of heaven upon the earth in the sight of men. And he deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by reason of the signs which it was given him to do in the sight of the beast."

Prophets prove the divinity of their mission by signs and wonders; and it being given to this one (by art or deceit?<sup>1</sup>) to do great signs, his success in misleading men must also be great. Many of his signs have already been done in the Romish Church, but the greatest will be done in the last time, when he shall use all his power to strengthen the antichrist.

HOW THE CIRCUMSTANCES CALLED FOR AN ADVERSARY LIKE THIS.—It is the design of the dragon to have all men in his net and under his influence. In this he had hitherto had immense success; but Christ's coming

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<sup>1</sup> 2 Thess. ii, 9, 10.

into the world effected a great change in the divine party, in consequence of which Satan's prospect of further success became darker than it ever was. For through Christ the divine party was arrayed with the sunlight of God, and in her inner being regenerated by the Holy Spirit. To conquer worldly men and bring them under his influence, is an easy thing for Satan—he has in the beast an able, active, and successful agent—but the Church of God, in her divine light and life, stands forth against him an invincible power. How shall he conquer this power? How shall he destroy such light, such life, or at least make them ineffectual, and introduce in their stead darkness and death? That is the question to be decided now. If he is unable to do any thing of the kind here, he is lost; for this light and life of God will grow and gradually expand over the whole human race. Satan knows very well that he is too weak to venture an open warfare against such light and life, and to measure his strength with such powers. Yet he is not discouraged; he has other means. What might can not accomplish he tries to effect by subtlety.

HOW HE DOES IT.—Here he finds the office of a false prophet very serviceable. Such an one presents himself innocent as a lamb. He enters the society of the pious, is pious with them, gains their confidence, and by his rare gifts and excellent qualities, he gradually attains respect and influence. Then he begins in a very solemn manner, and seemingly with the purest intent, to interpret this and that differently from what God designed it to mean, merely to fit it nicely to the circumstances and seeming requisites of the times. By a distortion of this kind, truth and piety soon become a mere form, and the whole system of divine doctrines is disfigured and destroyed. This is what a demon, in ability equal to the beast and dragon, endeavors to do, thus to occupy the position of a false prophet, and to

oppose and injure the work of God and of the Holy Spirit.

This position makes the false prophet the head and prince of all false prophets, and of those who distort God's truth. As the beast is engaged in the worldly kingdom, doing terrible work there, so the false prophet is active in the external sphere of the kingdom of God. Together they seek with all their power and cunning to establish the kingdom of the dragon on earth. Their crime is great beyond measure, and hence it is not to be wondered at, that at the next coming of our Lord these two are taken and cast alive into the lake of fire.<sup>1</sup>

Now, if the false prophet is unable to annihilate God's work, but can only cause disturbances, division, and confusion in it, even this is a gain for him. Though he may not be able to extinguish the light of the Church of God, yet if he succeeds in darkening it, he has gained an advantage for his cause; and as he is too weak to destroy her life, yet he is able by all kinds of attacks and hinderances to keep it within close confines and weaken it. This, too, will serve his purpose, for thus he robs the Church of her strength and efficiency, and strengthens the kingdom of Satan. This is what the false prophet is doing. It is an activity that the circumstances here demand, if Satan is to oppose the Church of God successfully. Such an agency must needs be set at work.

THIS KIND OF OPPOSITION STATED BY CHRIST HIMSELF.—How Satan will here begin to carry on a new opposition against the new position assumed by the Church, is described by Christ himself.<sup>2</sup> After he had sowed the good seed in his field there came secretly his enemy and sowed tares among the wheat and went away. These tares are the "darnel," which before it comes into ear is very similar in appearance to wheat.<sup>3</sup> Thus the

<sup>1</sup> Rev. xix, 20.    <sup>2</sup> Mat. xiii, 24-30, 36-43.    <sup>3</sup> Mat. xiii. 36.

opposition to the Church is here, without being perceived by her, not only placed, but planted in her midst to grow therein. It is sown so near the wheat, and so closely connected with it, that it can not be plucked out without rooting up the wheat with it. As it is brought in secretly, so it holds its evil nature secret, hiding it under an illusive external appearance. For though it is a noxious and poisonous plant, yet it looks very much like wheat, and is only fully known by its fruit.<sup>1</sup> This concealed and snaky importation of wickedness and opposition into the sphere of the Church, and the active continuance in the midst of the latter until the coming of the Lord, is simply a specification of the activity of the false prophet in the Lord's field during the present period. Here happens what Paul says: "For even Satan fashioneth himself into an angel of light. It is no great thing, therefore, if his ministers also fashion themselves as ministers of righteousness."<sup>2</sup> The false prophet, a demon and a mighty minister of Satan, transforms himself into a lamb. Now, if he, as our text says, deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by reason of the signs which it was given him to do in the sight of the beast, certainly his dissimulation contributes no small amount to his success.

HIS IMAGE OF THE BEAST.—Verse 14, 15: "Saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, who hath the stroke of the sword and lived. And it was given unto him to give life to it, even to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as should not worship the image of the beast should be killed."

This is a specimen of the work of this false prophet. His influence reaches not only a few, but a very large number—them that dwell on the earth. He can speak to them, and they do what he says: They make an image

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<sup>1</sup> Matt. vii, 15, 16.    <sup>2</sup> 2 Cor. xi, 14.

to the first beast. This image is, therefore, made by men, but its originator is a devil, and its purpose devilish. The subtlety of the serpent is here perceivable—men are permitted to make this image. In this he lets them have the honor, but after that it is his work, of which he takes immediate possession, giving life to it, and causing it to speak and to act. It becomes through him a terrible and most powerful instrument, a cruel tyrant of men. It claims worship for itself, and causes that as many as would not worship it should be killed.

WHAT IT MIGHT BE AND REALLY IS.—That this image was not in its first formation, nor is it to this day, a material one is self-evident; that it must be something corresponding with the peculiar activity of this demon, and even be the chief means of obtaining his purpose, is not less clear. We ask, then, first, What kind of a construction was possible, which those living on the earth might have brought about by the incitation of such a spirit as this false prophet? The whole endeavor of this demon is to falsify the truths of God, and to establish wherever he can errors and lies. Could he then require any thing else from those dwelling on the earth than that they assist him in this endeavor? When he tells them to make an image to the first beast, can it be any thing else except a work which essentially implies this purpose of setting up errors and lies?

But again, have those dwelling on the earth by the incitation of such a devil's spirit ever done any thing pointing in this direction? Let us hear what Paul says: "But the Spirit says expressly, that in later times some shall fall away from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, through the hypocrisy of men that speak lies, branded in their own conscience as with a hot iron; forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God created to be received with thanksgiving by them that believe and know the

truth.”<sup>1</sup> That the things here mentioned are doctrines of men, was the general opinion, but who thought that they were doctrines of devils? Thus we have here that which is made by men, but is originated by a devil. Now, are there not many worse doctrines than these set up by men and honored by professors of Christ as divine? When we consider the simple Gospel of Jesus, and compare with it that system of the so-called Christian Church as it existed and was generally accepted during the Middle Ages and until the Reformation, what a mass of false doctrines we find? The thoughtful Christian is filled with horror at the sight. Who set up these doctrines? Who constructed this entirely false system? Was it not done by men? Certainly; but behind them, we are told by the Revelation, was that hypocritical demon, the false prophet, who inspired them to do it.

How it was brought about, we know. The sowing of *darnel* and the falsifying of the doctrines of the Gospel was already begun in the times of Christ and the apostles. This plant of the devil grew unperceived, and attained without much opposition equal respectability and right as the wheat among which it grew. The so-called Church declared all those changes and additions of doctrines which sprang up on every side of the pure Gospel-system as equal to the Gospel. In this way the pure Gospel was gradually crowded out, and quite another system took its place.

Now, have we not in the erection of this false system of doctrines which took the place of the Gospel of God that image of the beast which demanded divine honor and worship? Were not thousands, yea, hundreds of thousands, of witnesses of Jesus killed for the single reason that they refused to do divine honor to this construction of men and of this demon? It is indeed a sad fact, but well known, that though heathenism during the first

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<sup>1</sup>1 Tim. iv, 1-4.



three centuries persecuted the followers of Jesus with fearful rage, yet it was far surpassed in this by the so-called Christian Church. That *other* beast, or the false prophet, has, under pretext of holy zeal and the twofold power of the Lamb, acted much worse than the first beast, spying out his victims with the most extreme acuteness. This, then, would be the image of the beast as an object of worship; but it has yet another aspect which deserves notice, namely:

THIS IMAGE AS A LIKENESS OF THE FIRST BEAST.—Here we ask: Whose image does the Gospel as a divine system bear? Does it not bear the image of God, its author? But whose image did that system of deformed and false doctrines bear, which, until the Reformation, was, with but few exceptions, worshiped by all professors of Christ? Did it not bear the impress or image of its makers—*i. e.*, of those men who stood under the influence of the false prophet? But while they were under his influence they were also under the influence of the first beast, for the false prophet maketh the earth and them that dwell therein to worship the first beast. Hence without intending it they became worshipers of the first beast. They, too, were also serving the mere spirit of the world; consequently the system erected by them would characterize itself as the work of these worshipers of the beast, and bear the image of that beast. Since they had transformed the Gospel doctrines according to their worldly and animal minds into a worldly Church-system to suit the worldly taste of their age in general, they had, as it were, embodied their mind and being into that system. How, then, could it otherwise than show itself? Who does not see it? Look at this system as it stands to-day still unimpaired before you in the Romish Church! Is it not readily seen there that all doctrines so far as they are deformed, or are the mere work of men, bear the image of worldly-mindedness and

of the inner characteristics of the beast? For the outward organization of the Church, which originally was theocratic-republican, was changed into an imperial and despotic organization—into a papacy. This ecclesiastic form of government is a *facsimile* of the then existing form of government of the Roman Empire, the sixth head of the beast. It is a transformation in direct opposition to the explicit command of the Lord: "It shall not be so among you."<sup>1</sup> Thus does this image of the beast possess the features of the first beast, and is in so far a likeness of the latter until the present time.

That it will IN THE LAST TIMES, under the antichrist, when the mystery of lawlessness is fully unfolded, show itself in much more frightful and horrible features, is to be expected from the nature of the case. The image of the beast will then express the complete fullness of the abominations and terrors of the spirit from the abyss. It will present the complete system of the antichrist. Yea, when this lawless one shall finally exalt himself against all that is called God or that is an object of worship, so that he sitteth in the temple of God, setting himself forth as God:<sup>2</sup> then will it also not be improbable that he shall even erect his own statue to be worshipped. As his greatest displays will take place in Jerusalem, in the temple then rebuilt, there is reason to assume that this constitutes that abomination of desolation standing in the holy place to which Christ calls our attention.<sup>3</sup>

THE MARK OF THE BEAST. Verses 16, 17: "And he causeth all, the small and the great, the rich and the poor, the free and the bond, that there be given them a mark on their right-hand, or upon their forehead; and that no man should be able to buy or to sell, save he that hath the mark, even the name of the beast or the number of his name."

The great success of the false prophet derives no

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<sup>1</sup> Matt. xx, 25-28.    <sup>2</sup> 2 Thess. ii, 4.    <sup>3</sup> Matt. xxiv, 15.  
Also see note 5.

little strength from "a mark" which he gives to men of all classes. "The small and great" may signify children and grown persons; but may also, as Paul uses this expression, denote people of lower and higher standing and official position;<sup>1</sup> or other preferences.<sup>2</sup>

The "mark," Greek *charagma*, signifies something impressed, a stamp, a sign. It is derived from the same word as "character," and has thus nearly the same signification. If we, then, say that the false prophet impresses in some degree his character on his adherents, no one will question it; and herein we already have a certain foundation upon which the mark of the beast rests. Those possessing this mark impressed by this deceiving spirit distinguish themselves by it from all other men. They form a society or body by themselves. This mark is impressed "on their right-hand or on their foreheads." In this it shows some semblance with that sealing of the servants of God on their foreheads,<sup>3</sup> where it also serves as a mark of distinction. It is not to be supposed that this mark, as it is developed to our times, is something frightful or wicked in its appearance. No. The false prophet is very careful to avoid every appearance of evil, and to present the worst wickedness in a most pleasing, innocent, and holy garment. To him nothing is too holy and too sublime, if it only serves his purpose. Thus, we must also expect to find his mark presented under an inoffensive and pious form. Still in our time we are not to look for it as fully developed according to our text, on the right-hand or on the forehead. Only in the last time shall it thus literally appear, when the mystery of lawlessness shall be fully revealed. A plant only appears complete when it is fully grown and developed. Before that a great deal is hidden, enclosed in the plant, as for instance the ear is hid and shut up in the stalk.

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<sup>1</sup> Acts xxvi, 22.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. xviii, 6.

<sup>3</sup> Rev. vii.

The purpose of this mark is, closely considered, a twofold one. First, it is a sign by which one is made a member of the corporation of the false prophet. It is the sign of initiation into this corporation. To become a member of this corporation is doubtless, according to the interpretation of the false prophet, nothing less than to become a member of "the only true Church." How could this demon, transforming himself into an angel of light, call his corporation by another name? It is also the sign which allows its possessor the exercise of the common human rights. He may buy and sell within the domain of the false prophet. To understand how this mark now exists, and has been existing long before this time, we must look for it in that party of the Church which from the beginning and to this day has been the most zealous worshiper of the image of the beast, and which has also showed against all other denominations the most vehement intolerance and enmity. This is the ROMISH CHURCH. Here no lack of signs of peculiar signification are found, though many of them are not evil in themselves. The sign of the cross is certainly nothing bad, for it reminds us of the greatest and sublimest thing which God did for mankind. However, this does not prevent its being misused, so that the false prophet may hide his mark behind it. The cross has in that Church such a multilateral signification that it represents according to the general idea that Church itself. Of these multilateral significations we mention here only: first, that the cross made with the right-hand from the forehead to the breast, is the mark to make one's self known as a member of the Romish Church, thus distinguishing one's self from others. Again, the making of the cross with oil on the forehead by the bishop (which act is called the second sacrament) is the sign by which one is confirmed as a full member of this Church, after having before under this sign (in the first sacrament)

been received into this Church. The intolerance of the Romish Church against other denominations is known; and if she appears to-day not as violent as in former times, it is not because she has changed her mind, but because she has lost her power.

**THE NAME OF THE BEAST.**—This is likewise described as a means to procure human rights in this corporation. To have the name of this beast is in all probability as much as to call himself by this name, to be considered as going by this name. Similar to this is the signification of

**THE NUMBER OF HIS NAME.**—The Hebrews, Greeks, and Romans had no special signs for numbers, but used letters of their alphabets for that purpose. Thus a name consisting of certain letters, represented therewith a certain sum. Now it appears here that if any one had not the mark of the beast, nor his name, but had “the number of his name,” he was also admitted to the rights of that corporation. To have the number of his name, then, seems to be equal to proving that what one believes amounts essentially to as much as the name of the beast contains. The beast seems to allow his followers certain liberties in belief, providing there be agreement in the essential points. These three things, the mark, the name of the beast, and the number of his name, are the conditions under which it was possible to exist in the domain of the false prophet, and under which it shall further be possible to exist during the full antichristian display.

**THE NUMBER OF THE BEAST.**—Verse 18: “Here is wisdom. He that hath understanding let him count the number of the beast; for it is the number of a man, and his number is six hundred and sixty-six.”

“For it is the number of a man,” means to say: it lies within the ability of a man to find it out; hence,

it can not mean the number of his name as a Satanic spirit, for this a man might only be able to know by divine revelation. It means evidently the number of his name in his relation to the image of the beast, where this false prophet unites himself with this image, forming with it, as it were, one being—he himself being its animating power—and, therefore, it also means the number of the name of this image thus animated by the second beast or false prophet. Now let us use wisdom and understanding. Let us closely consider the whole secret, but mighty and successful, activity of this Satan number three. See how assiduously he has been engaged since the time of the apostles in falsifying the truths and doctrines of God! See his success in bringing into existence a false system—a copy of the first beast—and setting it in the place of the Gospel—not doing it all himself, but inspiring men to do it for him. Then when they had done it, how he gave life to this system and image, making it the most powerful instrument for the achievement of his purpose. It could speak and cause that as many as should not worship it should be killed, etc. Let us thoroughly consider every thing directly said of this image of the beast, and every thing connected with it in the past, present, as also in the future, when under the antichrist, it shall stand before the world as the complete system of the devil.

By what Scriptural name shall we call this construction brought about by men and devils? What does the New Testament inform us that Christ called such doctrines and designated such a system? He calls them, “the precepts of men,”<sup>1</sup> and designates them with the one name, “Paradosis,” *i. e.*, tradition. Farther than this our wisdom and understanding does not go. This suffices. This name answers the purpose perfectly in

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<sup>1</sup> Matt. xv, 3, 6-10; Mark vii, 7-13.

every respect; hence, also in the amount of its numeral value as the specification of this Greek name shows:<sup>1</sup>

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600		8	1	100	4	700	200	10	200

REV. XIV: CLOSE OF THE GREAT CONFLICT.—We have hitherto seen passing before our eyes the Church of God, the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet, in the leading features of their character, as also of their history. The nature and development of the Church was exceedingly beautiful and glorious; that of the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet extremely ugly and shocking. Because the worst done by these three demoniac adversaries will come to pass in the very last times, these will prove for the Christians, as the Lord says, “times of great tribulation, such as hath not been from the beginning of the world until now; no, nor ever shall be.”<sup>2</sup> In the face of such extremely difficult and discouraging circumstances the Lord comes with a series of encouragements in this chapter, by which he incites his people to a faithful perseverance in this last conflict, making these encouragements leading features of the history of these last times, and clearly also do they shine forth from what he says here.

VERSES 1-3: “And I saw, and behold the Lamb standing on the Mount Zion, and with him a hundred and forty and four thousand, having his name, and the name of his Father, written on their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as a voice of a great thunder; and the voice which I heard was as the voice of harpers, harping with their harps. And they sing as it were a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders: and no man could learn the song save the hundred and forty and four thousand, even they that are purchased out of the earth.”

<sup>1</sup> See Note 6.  
Dan. x, 1.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. xxiv, 21; Mark xiii, 19;

Here is, 1. A REPRESENTATION OF THOSE WHO HAVE PROVED THEMSELVES FAITHFUL IN THE CONFLICT, AND WHO HAVE OVERCOME.—They are presented as an encouraging example to those who are still in the conflict, that they also may faithfully persevere and overcome. They stand united with the greatest conqueror on the heavenly Mount Zion,<sup>1</sup> and are doubtless the same hundred and forty and four thousand that were sealed before the judgments of God were allowed to come over the earth,<sup>2</sup> and that came forth victorious through all the judgments of God and the corruptions of men. To them the promise given to the Church of Philadelphia has been fulfilled:<sup>3</sup> “The name of the Lamb and the name of his Father was written on their foreheads.” The rejoicing song of victory is heard, sounding like the noise of many waters, and as a voice of great thunder. There is music of the harps. There is singing of praise. They sing a new song before the throne, and before the four living creatures and the elders; and no man is able to learn it but they. Their character is further described thus:

VERSE 4: “These are they which were not defiled with women”—with such as Babylon the great or other unholy societies—“for they are virgins.”<sup>4</sup> These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth—they follow not the precepts of men or the image of the beast. “These were purchased<sup>5</sup> from among men to be the first fruits unto God and unto the Lamb.”

VERSE 5: “And in their mouth was found no lie: they are without blemish.”

They did not justify any doctrine or position which they knew to be false.

VERSES 6, 7: “And I saw another angel flying in mid heaven, having an eternal gospel to proclaim unto them that

<sup>1</sup> Heb. xii. 22.    <sup>2</sup> Rev. vii. 3.    <sup>3</sup> Rev. iii. 12.    <sup>4</sup> 2 Cor. xi. 2.    <sup>5</sup> 1 Cor. vi. 20.



sit on the earth, and to every nation and tribe and tongue and people; and he said with a great voice, Fear God, and give him glory; for the hour of his judgment is come; and worship him that made the heaven and the earth and sea and fountains of waters."

Here we have, 2. A PROCLAMATION OF THE IMMUTABILITY AND INDESTRUCTIBILITY OF THE DIVINE PURPOSE IN REGARD TO THE SALVATION OF MEN.—"I saw another angel," refers to an angel seen before this, and who probably appeared with what was introduced at the beginning of this chapter XIV.

The time here indicated is called "a short time,"<sup>1</sup> when the dragon displays great wrath; when that soul of the beast from the abyss is present on earth, and the false prophet is also doing his utmost; they together succeed in abolishing Christianity in the dominion of the beast; yea, it is their design to banish it from the whole world, and set up in its stead a system, an image of the beast according to the latter's mind and nature at this time, with the antichrist at its head. Within the dominion of the beast (of the ten horns) they shall fully accomplish their purpose.<sup>2</sup> The existence of such a sad state of things clearly appears from the message of this angel. Hence, he assumes his position with regard to this state of things: "Flying in mid heaven," in order to make his voice heard in every direction over the earth. "An eternal gospel," not a new one, but the one gospel of the Son of God, Jesus Christ, which they suppose here to be abolished. This is immutable and indestructible. It is a work lasting forever, and which shall be forever praised.

Consider the expression: "Unto them that sit on the earth." To them, first, before all others, is this gospel and this proclamation addressed. This expression signifies not merely "to dwell," as some translate it, but "to

<sup>1</sup> Rev. xii, 12; xvii, 10.    <sup>2</sup> Rev. xiii, 7, 8.

sit" with dignity and authority as judge, king, etc. Hence, it is principally aimed at the leaders in the dominion of the beast, but also at every nation and tribe and tongue and people devoted to the beast, and no longer fearing God, nor acknowledging him as the creator of the heaven, earth, and sea, and fountains of waters. The angel's call for a worthy worship of God is urged by an important reason: "For the hour of his judgment is come." The hour of God's judgment, long ago intimated, is declared to be very near.

VERSE 8: "And another, a second angel, followed, saying, Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, which hath made all the nations to drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication."

Here is

3. BY ANOTHER ANGEL CALLED INTO REMEMBRANCE A GREAT JUDGMENT OF GOD AS A WARNING EXAMPLE.—The fall of Babylon the great will at this time be a past event, for it takes place at the beginning of these full unfoldings of the beast,<sup>1</sup> and is therefore then still in general living remembrance, not a few eye witnesses of this great event being still alive. This fearful judgment, which God had foretold many centuries, and in regard to whose execution he seemed to be slack, he is here setting up as a warning example. Babylon fell, yea, she is fallen, though she was allowed a long and wicked course; though she was great and mighty! As surely as her predicted judgment came upon her, so shall also the foretold judgments of God's adversaries be executed to the letter!<sup>2</sup> "For by her unholy and filthy doctrines she has corrupted all nations:" be not ye also corrupted by the unholy and abominable doctrines of the beast!

VERSES 9-11: "And another angel, a third, followed them, saying with a great voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receiveth a mark on his forehead,

<sup>1</sup> Rev. xvi, 19.    <sup>2</sup> Chap. xix, 20, 21; xx, 1-3.

or upon his hand, he also shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is prepared unmixed in the cup of his anger; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: and the smoke of their torment goeth up for ever and ever; and they have no rest day and night, they that worship the beast and his image, and whoso receiveth the mark of his name."

This testimony contains:

4. A SOLEMN WARNING.—From the whole it appears that the beast, and his image, and his mark are here in full activity. This is the time of the most strenuous display of power and deception by the combined adversaries. Into this time and state of things God causes his voice of solemn warning to sound through this third angel. He testifies against the doings of the beast and describes the severe punishment of those who do homage to the beast, and significantly he adds (verse 12): "Here is the steadfastness of the saints, they that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus." Here will it become manifest how many there are who continue in serving God and in believing in Jesus.

VERSE 13: "And I heard a voice from heaven saying, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; for their works follow with them."

5. A COMFORTING, CHEERING PROMISE.—A voice from heaven. This may be the Lord's voice. What John is commanded to write refers to the dying of the believers. The beast allows the believers no religious liberty, but persecutes them with deadly rage. It is with regard to this state that it is written: "Yea, for thy sake are we killed all the day long; we are counted as sheep for the slaughter."<sup>1</sup> Blessed are such at all times who suffer persecution for Jesus' sake;<sup>2</sup> blessed especially here, first, because there is no hope whatever that from

<sup>1</sup> Ps. xliv, 22.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. v, 11, 12.

this time on and during the remaining part of this dispensation or period the circumstances may improve so that Christians might again quietly serve their God and Savior, for this great tribulation will continue, and its severity even increase, until the Lord by his coming shall make an end of it. For this reason to die in the Lord is from that time on the best. Blessed is he who thus can die! There is rest from all hardships and labors; but those who here die in the Lord are also the more blessed, because *their works follow with them*, to whom God has promised a very great recompense. They will not have to wait as long for it as many others before them. Christ's appearing may at that time be expected every moment, and will very soon take place, causing the resurrection and transformation of his faithful, and bestowing upon them divine and heavenly glory according to their works.

VERSES 14-16: "And I saw, and behold, a white cloud; and on the cloud I saw one sitting like unto a son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle. And another angel came out from the temple, crying with a great voice to him that sat on the cloud, Send forth thy sickle and reap: for the hour to reap is come; for the harvest of the earth is overripe. And he that sat on the cloud cast his sickle upon the earth: and the earth was reaped."

Here we have

6. A REPRESENTATION OF THE MIGHTY DELIVERANCE NEAR AT HAND OF THE BELIEVERS BY THE COMING OF THE LORD FROM HEAVEN.—In one of his parables the Lord also speaks of a harvest, and explaining it, he says: "The harvest is the end of the age;<sup>1</sup> and the reapers are the angels. . . . The Son of man shall send forth his angels," etc.<sup>2</sup> In speaking of *his coming*, he likewise says: "And he shall send forth his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect,"

<sup>1</sup> See note 7.    <sup>2</sup> Matt. xiii, 30, 39, 41.

etc.<sup>1</sup> Jesus is the Lord of the harvest, yet he is harvesting at the command of God, his Father, sent to him through an angel out of the temple; for this day is the great day of God, the Almighty. It is the day of redemption for his people.<sup>2</sup> Here the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.<sup>3</sup>

VERSES 17-20: "And another angel came out from the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle. And another angel came out from the altar, he that hath power over fire, and he called with a great voice to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Send forth thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe. And the angel cast his sickle into the earth and gathered the vintage of the earth, and cast it into the wine-press, the great wine-press of the wrath of God. And the wine-press was trodden without the city, and there came out blood from the wine-press, even unto the bridles of the horses, as far as a thousand and six hundred furlongs."

Here is brought before us

7. THE JUDGMENT OF THE WICKED AT THE COMING OF THE LORD.—The believers and the wicked are both compared to plants whose fruit becomes ripe. The believers are the wheat; the wicked are the clusters of the vine. As a body the wicked are the vine of the earth, especially under their head, the antichrist; and thus they are the opposite of Christ, the heavenly vine. This event here represented is the same represented by the Base<sup>4</sup> and the Alto<sup>5</sup> under the figure of an earthquake; but by the Treble and Tenor<sup>6</sup> under the figure of treading the wine-press and killing with the sword. The Alto and the Tenor, like the Treble, connect this judgment with the Lord's gathering and carrying home of his believers. It

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxiv, 31. <sup>2</sup> Eph. iv, 30; Rom. viii, 23. <sup>3</sup> 1 Thess. iv, 16, 17. <sup>4</sup> Rev. vi, 12-17. <sup>5</sup> Rev. xi, 13. <sup>6</sup> Rev. xix, 11-21.

will also be noticed that the person here reaping the grapes comes from the same place as the one reaping the wheat—*i. e.*, out from the temple; but the harvest of the grapes differs among other things, also in this: it is connected with the altar and with fire—pointing to a sacrifice.

The wine-press of the East is a vat hewn out of solid rock, into which the grapes are laid to be trodden by the feet of men. The juice thus extracted escaped by an aperture into a lower vat, or was at once collected in vessels.<sup>1</sup> This is a figure showing how the wicked shall be destroyed. They shall here, as ripe fruit, be cut off, and be brought together into a special place—into the great wine-press of the wrath of God—and be trodden, crushed like grapes. Christ shall thus tread this wine-press.<sup>2</sup>

The place where this wine-press shall be, must be the locality into which the Lord shall gather the main body of the hosts of these adversaries—namely: in Har-Mageddon,<sup>3</sup> in the valley of Jehoshaphat,<sup>4</sup> in the valley of decision,<sup>5</sup> in the place called Tophet.<sup>6</sup> Our text designates this place as being “without the city.” Now, from the fact that in these last times Jerusalem will be made a cup of trembling unto all the people gathered there,<sup>7</sup> we must look for the locality of this wine-press outside of the city Jerusalem. In this matter Isaiah gives us valuable information in connecting the land of Idumea and its former capital, Bozrah, very closely with this wine-press;<sup>8</sup> but the exact locality of old Bozrah being unknown to this day, it will also be impossible to define accurately the locality of this wine-press. However, it will be in Idumea, and hence not very far from Jerusalem. For Isaiah testifies that it shall remain with the

<sup>1</sup> W. Smith's Dic. of the B., Wine and Wine-press. <sup>2</sup> Rev. xix, 15; Isa. lxiii, 3-6. <sup>3</sup> Rev. xvi, 16. <sup>4</sup> Joel iii, 2. <sup>5</sup> Chap. iii, 19. <sup>6</sup> Isa. xxx, 33. <sup>7</sup> Zech. xii, 2-9; Isa. xxix, 1-8; viii, 5-8. <sup>8</sup> Chapters xxxiv and lxiii.

carcasses of those slain there by the Lord, a standing example of this judgment of the great day of God Almighty, for those living during the millennium and after: "And it shall come to pass that from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the Lord. And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me; for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh."<sup>1</sup>

"And there came out blood from the winepress, even unto the bridles of the horses." This is the consequence of treading the wine press, and a figure showing us the formidableness and magnitude of this judgment of God's enemies. "Unto the bridles of the horses," marks the height of this bloody flood, and intimates that in these armies of the nations there were many riding on horses, which is prophesied also in other places.<sup>2</sup> "Unto the bridles of the horses," may be synonymous with "unto the neck," and by this be explained. Thus the prophet speaking of the destruction of the antichrist says: "Thou didst dash to pieces the head out of the house of the wicked, pouring out from the ground to the neck."<sup>3</sup> Isaiah, speaking of the same time, and of the same event, says: "Behold the name of the Lord cometh from far, . . . and his breath as an overflowing stream shall reach to the neck."<sup>4</sup> As he is here describing the destruction of the antichrist and his armies, so is he also describing in another place how these hosts come in this locality and fill the land, thus: "Now, therefore, behold the Lord bringeth up upon them the waters of the river, strong and many, even the king of Assyria, and all his glory: and he shall come up over all his channels, and go over all his banks. And he shall pass through Judah;

<sup>1</sup> Isa. lxxv, 23, 24.  
iii, 13 (see margin).

<sup>2</sup> Zech. xii, 4; Rev. xix, 18.  
<sup>4</sup> Isa. xxx, 27, 28.

<sup>3</sup> Hab.

he shall overflow and go over, he shall reach even to the neck; and the stretching out of his wings shall fill the breadth of thy land, O, Immanuel."<sup>1</sup> With the light of this flood is also described its length.

"As far as a thousand and six hundred furlongs." That is about two hundred miles. Now what meaning is there in this treading of the winepress, and in this unheard of great and bloody flood produced by it? Here also Isaiah gives us information. In calling the attention of all the world and every thing in it to hear, he speaks of this event thus: "For the indignation of the Lord is upon all nations, and his fury upon all their armies: he hath utterly destroyed them, he hath delivered them to the slaughter. Their slain also shall be cast out, and their stink shall come up out of their carcasses, and the mountains shall be melted with their blood. And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll: and all their host shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the vine, and as a falling fig from the fig tree. For my sword shall be bathed in heaven: behold it shall come down upon Idumea, and upon the people of my curse to judgment. The sword of the Lord is filled with blood, it is made fat with fatness, with the blood of lambs and goats, with the fat of the kidneys of rams: for the Lord hath a sacrifice in Bozrah, and a great slaughter in the land of Idumea."<sup>2</sup> The Lord calls this destruction of the wicked a sacrifice. It is from this standpoint that this slaughtering and shedding of blood has to be considered in order to understand its true signification. In a sacrifice the victim was killed and its blood sprinkled round about the altar, and, as is well known, had the signification of expiation and cleansing. "According to the law, almost all things are cleansed with blood."<sup>3</sup> Now as the length of this stream of blood has just the

<sup>1</sup> Isa. viii, 7, 8.

<sup>2</sup> Chap. xxxiv, 1-16.

<sup>3</sup> Heb. ix, 22.



length of the holy land, and this winepress being located at the southern border of this land, the thought suggests itself that this bloody flood might signify the cleansing of the holy land.<sup>1</sup> This land stands alone in regard to the other countries of the world, and was chosen by God to establish therein his sanctuary; but now it has been trodden down for many centuries and defiled by the Gentiles, nay, filled with inconceivable abominations, especially by the antichrist, whose abomination of desolation shall stand there in the holy place,<sup>2</sup> and consequently must even fill the whole land by the armies and worshippers of this lawless one. Against all this is then this stream of blood directed. Not only in the winepress shall God's enemies be destroyed, but the same breath of divine wrath affecting the winepress, proceeds thence and passes as a destroying and cleansing stream through the entire holy land, to cleanse it from its enemies and abominations. As Christ suffered "without the gate," that he might sanctify the people through his own blood, so shall the antichrist and his nearest associates be slain and made a sacrifice of expiation and cleansing without the city for that country which God has inviolably promised to his people (Israel) as their possession forever, and which those who remain at that time, shall be prepared to possess forever as a cleansed, regenerated, and holy people.

EXPLANATION OF A PASSAGE OF SCRIPTURE.—To this subject, moreover, the remaining part of the passage cited above refers.<sup>3</sup> There the Hebrew term *nuph* is translated *to sift*. Now this is the same word which denotes that peculiar action of swinging or moving to and fro of the offering, and hence it is translated *to wave*. This waving was sometimes done before the victim was killed, sometimes after it was killed. By living victims<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Compare Isa. iv, 4.      <sup>2</sup> Matt. xxiv, 15.      <sup>3</sup> Isa. xxx, 27, 28.      <sup>4</sup> Lev. xiv, 1-13, 24.

and by the Levites (these latter had also to be waved in their consecration)<sup>1</sup> this performance must have been a leading to and fro.<sup>2</sup> From this it appears that this passage also has reference to sacrifice and would read thus: "Behold the name of the Lord cometh from far, . . . and his breath as an overflowing stream shall reach to the neck to wave the nations with a waving of vanity, and with a bridle in the jaws of the people, causing them to err." The waving here is evidently that leading to and fro of these wicked in a vain or deceiving manner, until they are in the appointed place of slaughter in that great winepress of the wrath of God. As with a bridle in their jaws the Lord causes them to go where they would not go if they knew the Lord's design. Thus it is here plainly shown, and well to be considered, that it is the Lord who gathers these grapes into his wine-press, as it is also said: "And he gathered them into the place which is called in Hebrew Har-Mageddon."<sup>3</sup>

A SHORT RESUME OF THIS WHOLE PART.—We have thus considered one of the four parts which together represent the prophetic history contained in the Revelation. Like as in a song in which the four parts are engaged, the treble contains the melody proper, so do we see in the part just considered the melody or leading features of the prophetic history of the Revelation. As in any treatise the first question always is: "What?" *i. e.*, What is the fact? and afterward the "How" may come in; so has also this part, or Treble, brought before us this first question, and has named and described the subjects of which the Revelation treats in its representation of history. These subjects are, first, the *Church of God* in her gradual formation in four periods; second, *Christ* in his descent according to the flesh; third, the

<sup>1</sup> Num. viii, 11–15. <sup>2</sup> Saadias cited by W. Gesenius, *Hebr. and German Dic.*, p. 527, Third Ed., Leipzig. <sup>3</sup> Rev. xvi, 16; compare also Joel iii, 9–16.

three chief leaders of the adversary party, *The Dragon*, *the Beast*, and *the False Prophet*; fourth, that *pre-eminent number* among the saved, the hundred and forty and four thousand; fifth, *the divine revelations* for the last times; sixth, *the coming of the Lord from heaven* for a double purpose, to take the believers home into heaven, and to destroy the wicked from the earth.

It is required by the nature of the case that such a representation of our history like the one contained in the Treble, be considered first, for the Treble alone goes back to the beginning of this conflict, to the first man. Hence, it brings us to a point of time from which the other parts, each in its own way, continue to present the history thus begun. Thus we are now prepared to proceed further, and to hear something of the "How," or, according to the law of music, after having heard the melody of the song, we will now hear its fundamental tones, or the representation of that part called, the *Base*.

# THE BASE

OF THE

HISTORY OF OUR PRESENT PERIOD.

General Representation

OF THIS HISTORY FROM THE TIMES OF THE LORD AND  
THE APOSTLES TO THE COMING OF THE LORD.

## Explanation of Part I.

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### THE BASE OF THE HISTORY OF OUR PRESENT PERIOD.

(FROM REV. IV TO THE END OF CHAP. VI.)

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BEFORE we come to the actual representation of history of this part, there comes a very significant introduction.

REV. IV, 1: "After these things I saw, and behold a door opened in heaven, and the first voice which I heard, a voice as of a trumpet speaking with me, one saying, Come up hither, and I will show thee the things which must come to pass hereafter."

What John had seen and heard to the close of Chapter III was on earth, and had reference to the seven Churches in Asia; but now there is something else coming, viz., "the things which must come to pass hereafter." Here begins a new division of the Revelation, and John receives command from the Lord, through a visible door opened in heaven, to ascend thither.

VERSE 2: "Straightway I was in the Spirit."

This not only means that John was filled with the Spirit of God, but he found himself in a peculiar spiritual condition, capable of beholding spiritual things, so that it was more than simply a trance. His condition was similar to that of Paul, and excelled even the latter's condition, who (whether in the body or out of the body he knew not) was caught up to the third heaven. John here is "in the Spirit," and in heaven, and sees what no other man has been deemed worthy of seeing.

"And behold, there was a throne set in heaven, and one sitting upon the throne." Verse 3: "And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper stone and a sardius."

His throne is no other than that of God, and hence, he that sits upon it is the infinite God himself, showing himself in a certain form. John gives us no description of his form, but speaks of his appearance, and compares it to a jasper stone and a sardius. The jasper is designated as the most precious stone, and clear as crystal, and the light of the heavenly Jerusalem—the glory of God—is compared to it.<sup>1</sup> This is doubtless the stone which we to-day call diamond. The stone called jasper to-day does not answer to the one of our text. The sardius stone has a red brightness; and the combination of this two-fold brightness appears to us as a proclaimer of light, purity, life, love, and other divine attributes.<sup>2</sup>

"And there was a rainbow round about the throne, like an emerald to look upon." Verse 4: "And round about the throne were four and twenty thrones: and upon the thrones four and twenty elders sitting, arrayed in white garments; and on their heads crowns of gold."

The rainbow is the sign of God's covenant, and is here represented as a circle—"round about the throne"—and surely implies more than the covenant with Noah and his descendants. Noah's bow is the result of natural powers, but the one of our text arises out of the glory and the attributes of him who sits on the throne. It has but one color, that of an emerald, which is green, like the product of the earth brought forth on the third day of creation.<sup>3</sup>

Who are the elders sitting on four and twenty thrones? The explanation is given us where these elders sing: <sup>4</sup> "And didst purchase unto God with thy blood men of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation,

<sup>1</sup> Rev. xxi, 11.

<sup>2</sup> See Ezek. i, 28; Exod. xxiv, 9, 10.

<sup>3</sup> Gen. i, 11, 12.

<sup>4</sup> Rev. v, 9, 10.

and madest them to be unto God a kingdom and priests, and they shall reign over the earth." If what the elders here say referred to themselves, then they might be considered as representatives of the redeemed; but by saying this of others, we must consider them as the highest angels, surrounding the throne of God, and sitting on thrones nearest to God. Besides this, they possess a priestly character, for each one had golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.<sup>1</sup>

VERSE 5: "And out of the throne proceed lightnings and voices and thunders."

These are the proclaimers of the presence and of the manifestation of God<sup>2</sup> in three ways: by light, by distinct voices, and by mighty shaking voices.

"And there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God."

These lamps also proceed out of the throne, and from God. As seven Spirits are they the one Spirit of God in his seven fold operation,<sup>3</sup> manifest also in Christ, the Lamb.<sup>4</sup> As the light of the material sun in its all-enlightening and animating influence upon nature consists of seven shades, called colors, so is here in a similar way the divine sun presented. The natural is a copy of the spiritual. An instance how this divine light, this Spirit of God, is expressed seven fold in holy writ, we find in the following passage, where the number four among the seven plainly distinguishes itself by naming the word "Spirit" four times:<sup>5</sup>

"And upon him shall rest,

"*The Spirit* of Jehovah,

"*The Spirit* of wisdom and understanding,

"*The Spirit* of counsel and might,

"*The Spirit* of knowledge and of the fear of Jehovah."

<sup>1</sup> Rev. v, 8.      <sup>2</sup> Exod. xix, 16.      <sup>3</sup> R. C. Trench, D. D.,  
Seven Churches in Asia, Rev. iii, 1.

<sup>4</sup> Rev. v, 6.

<sup>5</sup> Isa. xi, 2.

In a more extended sense these seven Spirits of God show the diversities of gifts and operations of the Spirit of God through the Church in the world. "There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are diversities of operations, but it is the same God, who worketh all things in all."

VERSES 6-11: "And before the throne, as it were a glassy sea, like unto crystal; and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, four living creatures full of eyes before and behind. And the first creature was like unto a lion, and the second creature like a calf, and the third creature had a face as of a man, and the fourth creature was like a flying eagle. And the four living creatures, having each one of them six wings, are full of eyes round about and within; and they have no rest day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God, the Almighty, which was, and which is, and which is to come. And when the living creatures shall give glory and honor and thanks to him that sitteth on the throne, to him that liveth forever and ever, the four and twenty elders shall fall down before him that sitteth on the throne, and shall worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and shall cast down their crowns before the throne, saying, Worthy art thou, our Lord and God, to receive the glory, and the honor, and the power: for thou didst create all things, and because of thy will they were, and were created."

This is a description of the appearance of the glory of the throne of God, and of the heavenly beings connected with it on this occasion. What John saw here is similar to what Ezekiel saw by the river of Chebar,<sup>1</sup> but it is much more glorious and grand. The four and twenty elders with crowns upon their heads, sitting on four and twenty thrones around the throne of God, and the seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God, are not in Ezekiel's vision. What Ezekiel saw, he saw while on earth and at another time, and it doubtless also had reference to other condi-

<sup>1</sup> Ezek. i.



tions of time; but John is in heaven, and sees this glory of God in heaven, and under conditions where the salvation of God had progressed farther and more gloriously.

What are the four living creatures? Many translators have called them beasts, but this is assuredly a very inappropriate name. To all appearances they are beings of as high a nature as the cherubim, if not higher. For Ezekiel calls the living creatures of his vision, cherubim;<sup>1</sup> and compared with them the four living creatures of the Revelation are of a higher order; they are more like the seraphim.<sup>2</sup> Ezekiel calls also the four living creatures together, one being, "the cherub," which explains the passage, where it is said of the Lord: "And he rode upon a cherub, and did fly."<sup>3</sup> The Lord appearing upon a cherub consisting of four, may have been seen by others before the times of Ezekiel. Thus united, they may be considered the bearers of the throne of God here and in Ezekiel; but they are also glorious representers of the law of four in diverse ways. They represent the creation, in which and above which God has established his throne, and which constantly praises its creator. Their eyes—the instruments of seeing—show us the fullness of their knowledge and wisdom in every sphere to which they may direct them.

*Their praise.* It will be noticed that the praise of the four living creatures is threefold: holy, holy, holy; and so is that of the elders: glory, and honor, and power. They are the beings nearest to God. Their praise is strictly divine, consisting of the divine number.

REV. v, 1: "And I saw in the right-hand of him that sat on the throne a book."

The foregoing chapter gave us a description of the place from which the Revelation came. In this fifth chapter we have a description of the circumstances

<sup>1</sup> Ezek. x.

<sup>2</sup> Isa. vi, 1.

<sup>3</sup> Psa. xviii, 10.

under which it was given to Christ, the Lamb. He that sits on the throne is God; and in his right-hand is a book, or more strictly a scroll, as the books were in those times. It was not a large scroll, but one of smaller form (biblion). This book, as the reader will soon clearly see, represents the Revelation itself; for in so far as it is opened, the contents of the Revelation are brought forth. The Revelation comes from the hand of God.

“Written within and on the back,” or inside and outside, means evidently that its contents are of an inner and outward nature, representing things of the inner, invisible, as also of the outward, visible sphere, which, in fact, we find to be so. It may also mean “the fullness or completeness of its contents,” comprising a full revelation of the time designed, not merely a few fractions of our history—like the prophecies of old, which give us here and there a hint of what would happen—but a full representation of all the leading events, in their order, character, and object from the beginning to the end of our period. “Sealed up with seven seals.” That which is sealed is generally of uncommon importance and sacred. A sevenfold seal of God implies the most complete and powerful divine sealing.

VERSES 2, 3: “And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a great voice, Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof? And no one in the heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the book or to look thereon.”

This strong angel is the adequate functionary of the task which is great and mighty, and for the performance of which he calls forth all the existing created powers and faculties. Here is a precious treasure of God designed for men, and whose opening would bring to the latter invaluable light and consolation; but who is able to make this treasure accessible to man? There are, indeed, mighty angels and powers in heaven, and the saints

on earth joining their faith to prayer lay hold on God's omnipotence; but in these three named localities into which the great voice of this strong angel penetrated, no one could be found able to open the book, or to look thereon. (To look closely thereon would have been as much as to look into it, because it was written on both sides.)

VERSE 4: "And I wept much, because no one was found worthy to open the book, or to look thereon."

The ability to open it lies especially in the worthiness of the person. It is obvious that John was forcibly impressed in his mind of the eminent importance of the book. He may even have strongly surmised that to know its contents and to make them known to others was the very object for which he was called up into heaven. Hence, seemingly disappointed in this great expectation, he wept much.

VERSE 5: "And one of the elders said unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion that is of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath overcome, to open the book and the seven seals thereof."

Here is consolation and instruction. The tribe of Judah was, on account of its future preference and strength called "a lion."<sup>1</sup> From this tribe came Christ; and because Judah's excelling characteristics reached the highest perfection in Christ, he is in truth not only called "a lion," but "the Lion" of the tribe of Judah. Of similar signification is the expression "Root of David," with the addition in another place,<sup>2</sup> "and the offspring of David" (literally: the family, race, or stock). These passages refer not to Christ's relation to David according to the flesh, but to the office of dominion and power given to the latter and his house forever.<sup>3</sup> Still though David stands thus as the embodiment of dominion and power,

<sup>1</sup> Gen. xlix, 10.    <sup>2</sup> Rev. xxii, 16.    <sup>3</sup> Ps. lxxxix, 4-37; 2 Sam. xxiii, 1-5; vii, 12-16.

he had it not from himself; for Christ is the root of it, with him it originated, and by him it is also perpetuated. He is both the root and the family of dominion, and has from this position in the divine kingdom power and ability, and is also "worthy" to open the book and its seals.

VERSE 6: "And I saw in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth."

The "midst" here spoken of can hardly be thought of otherwise than in the center of the throne—*i. e.*, right under it, and hence above the four living creatures stood the Lamb. This shows us Christ's position between the creature and God; but he appears here also in his office of reconciliation. This Lamb appearing here for the first time, or being mentioned by John for the first time, brings new significations with it. From a "little Lamb," and, besides this, "as slain," comes the highest worthiness and the greatest strength. God's wonderful ways are here made manifest. Christ, the weak and dying Lamb, possesses all the strength of a lion. In him we see the greatest weakness together with the greatest strength. He unites with his human nature also the divine. In his seven horns and seven eyes is to be seen the fullness of divine light and strength. The seven lamps of fire and the seven Spirits of God in the preceding chapter—where no mention was made of the Lamb—we may confidently consider as emanating from him.

VERSE 7: "And he came, and he has taken it out of the right-hand of him that sat on the throne."

John's attention was intensely fixed upon the Lamb. He saw him coming before the throne. Then in his earnest expectation, before he really seemed to be aware of it, happened what he so much desired, so that he adds in joyful surprise and ecstasy: "And he has taken the

book," etc. Thus his weeping was soon changed to great joy. Now this act, here made a special subject of representation, is nothing more than a specification of what is stated in the title to the Revelation,<sup>1</sup>—*i. e.*, how God gave this Revelation to Christ. This act may not appear so very great to many, but what the following and greater part of this chapter has to say about it will effectually change any sincere mind thus judging from appearances.

VERSE 8: "And when he took the book, the four living creatures and the four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having each a harp and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints."

Worship to the Lamb is the theme of this verse. Even the bearers of God's throne worship the Lamb. (Probably only the elders had harps and bowls.) This worship is accompanied with the sound of music. There is instrumental music in heaven as well as every other beautiful thing that rejoices our hearts on earth.

VERSE 9: "And they sing a new song, saying, Worthy art thou to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain and didst purchase unto God with thy blood, men of every tribe and tongue, and people and nation."

The handing of the book to the Lord is considered something new and great, and is moreover celebrated by a song adequate to the occurrence. Hence it is a new song; it could not be sung before this. The redeemed consist of four divisions of the human race: (1) according to special progenitors; (2) according to languages; (3) according to a constitution of positive principles; (4) according to a constitution of mere customs, as the Greek *ethos* signifies.

VERSE 10: "And didst make them unto our God a kingdom and priests: and they shall reign over the earth."

This is the reality of what God had formerly made

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<sup>1</sup> Rev. i, 1.

Israel to be only the figure,<sup>1</sup> and has reference to the future relation of the redeemed in heaven toward those living on earth.<sup>2</sup>

VERSE 11: "And I saw and heard a voice of many angels round about the throne and the living creatures and the elders; and the number of them was thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands."

The angels round about the throne are here mentioned for the first time. It is probable that they were not present in the scene described in the foregoing chapter. They are not the redeemed, but those myriads of angels mentioned in other places;<sup>3</sup> and hence they ought to be distinguished from the redeemed or the Church of the first-born.

VERSES 12-14: "Saying with a great voice, Worthy is the Lamb that hath been slain to receive the power, and riches, and wisdom, and might, and honor, and glory, and blessing. And every created thing which is in the heaven and on the earth and under the sea and on the sea, and all things that are in them heard I saying, Unto him that sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb, be the blessing, and the honor, and the glory, and the dominion for ever and ever. And the four living creatures said, Amen. And the elders fell down and worshiped."

The handing over of the book of Revelation is an occurrence whose importance is felt and acknowledged by all created beings in heaven, on earth, under the earth, on the sea, and by all things in them. They rejoice, praise, and worship God and the Lamb. The praise of the angels is *sevenfold*. That of the other creatures in heaven and on earth, etc., is *fourfold*. Consider also from whence the praise comes: it begins at the throne with the four living creatures and the four and twenty elders. Then it reaches the farther circles of heaven, the millions of angels, but it goes even farther.

<sup>1</sup> Ex. xix, 6.    <sup>2</sup> Rev. xx, 20.    <sup>3</sup> Heb. xii, 23; Dan. vii, 10.

It reaches every creature in heaven, on earth, under the earth, and in the sea; and after having thus penetrated every thing, the four living creatures say, Amen; and the four and twenty elders fall down and worship. After the place where the book comes from, and the manner in which it was given to Christ has been described, there follows:

## The Historical Representation of Part I, or Base.

### OPENING OF THE FIRST SEAL.

REV. VI, 1: "And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures saying as with a voice of thunder, Come and see."<sup>1</sup>

"One of the seals" and "one of the four living creatures" is a Hebrew mode of expression, in which language most probably the Revelation was communicated to John. The word "one" has there also the signification of "first," as for instance in the creation, where it reads in Hebrew "one" day, it means the first day of creation.<sup>2</sup> The living creature speaking here as with a voice of thunder is doubtless the one with a face of a lion, designated by John as the first.

VERSE 2: "And I saw, and behold, a white horse."

"White," which in the Greek has also the meaning of "light," is a very appropriate figure of light and purity.<sup>3</sup> The horse is noted in the Scriptures for its strength,<sup>4</sup> its dauntless courage in battle,<sup>5</sup> and swiftness.<sup>6</sup> This intimates in what manner the purpose in view shall here be pursued. "And he that sat thereon had a bow; and there was given unto him a crown: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer." Mere superficial observation has misled many to identify this rider with the one in chapter xix, 11, where it represents Christ. A

<sup>1</sup> See note 8.    <sup>2</sup> Gen. i, 5.    <sup>3</sup> Mark ix, 3; Isa. i, 18.

<sup>4</sup> Ps. cxlvii, 10.    <sup>5</sup> Job xxxix, 19-25.    <sup>6</sup> Jer. iv, 13; Hab. i, 8.

closer examination, however, will soon reveal a notable difference in the weapons with which these two riders enter the contest. The rider of chapter xix is armed with a sword, the one in this chapter is armed with a bow. To fight with the sword, is to meet the enemy fairly and openly, face to face. To fight with the bow is different. With the bow they fought from afar, and without showing themselves to the enemy. They hid themselves, and from their places of concealment shot their deadly arrows at the enemy. He, being unprepared, without a thought of danger, had no chance to defend himself.<sup>1</sup> That this rider chooses such a mode of warfare instead of the fair and open way places him in a very suspicious light, and directly opposed to him who is called "Faithful and True," and who in righteousness doth judge and make war.<sup>2</sup>

A still more striking difference between these two riders is seen in their respective connections with their attendants, and the purpose pursued by each of them. That of chapter xix is followed by the armies of heaven upon white horses clothed in fine linen, white and pure; and his purpose is "to smite the nations with the sword of his mouth." He comes to judge the nations, and to tread the wine-press of the fierceness of the wrath of Almighty God.

The one in our chapter is the first of a body of four. Of these the second appears on a red horse, and his mission is to take away peace from the earth, and that they should slay one another (verse 4). The third appears on a black horse as a messenger of famine or hunger (verses 5, 6). The fourth—the fulfillment of the three foregoing—appears on a pale horse; his name is Death, and Hades follows with him (verse 8).

The vast contrast between these two riders is very obvious. In fact, it could not be greater. For "Death and Hades" are the most extreme opposites of "life and

<sup>1</sup> Ps. xi, 2; lxiv, 4; Prov. xxvi, 18.    <sup>2</sup> Rev. xix, 11.



heaven." In no wise could the marks designating the power opposed to the divine cause be more forcibly expressed than they are in these four riders, which according to the law of four form a whole by themselves.<sup>1</sup> To the heretofore most doubting mind it must plainly appear that these four riders represent the adversary movement in the present period, and consequently this first rider portrays the first stage or the beginning of that movement.

But little explanation is needed here to show whom we have to understand under this rider; for we see before us that same activity which we saw in the false prophet, and which is described in the parable of the Lord by the sowing of tares among the wheat. We may safely conclude that this rider is a champion of the kingdom of darkness, and a servant of Satan. He is a match to the false prophet in his dissimulation and workings. He is a sheer fraud, stepping forth under the most innocent and pure colors. Separated from his three fellows, he is a complete mystery. No one knows what to make of him. No one can tell what he really is, or in what direction he is engaged; whether he intended to shoot or not, or whether he has any arrows. John, mentioning none, must have seen none, because this rider may have kept them purposely out of sight. Only in connection with the three others may he be fully and thoroughly known. As to his work, it is declared to be crowned with success: "There was given to him a crown; and he went forth conquering, and to conquer."

SIGNIFICATION OF THIS FIRST STAGE.—This first rider and this first stage of the work of the adversary party ought here especially to be considered from the standpoint of the law of four, and thus will it be seen that this first stage, represented by the lion, always assumes before the other three the position of *the Base*. It

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<sup>1</sup>See note 9.

contains the root and main substance of what is specified in the other three, and there more fully developed. For this reason does the first rider assume this position; and the historical features which he represents are therefore simply fundamental features of the whole movement of the adversary during this period. Whatever features the following riders and all the remaining figures representing the activity of the opposite party may bring forth, this first rider and this first stage will always prove themselves to be the fundamental ones.

### SECOND SEAL.

VERSES 3, 4: "And when he opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature saying, Come and see. And another horse came forth, a red horse: and to him that sat thereon it was given to take peace from the earth, and that they should slay one another: and there was given to him a great sword."

This rider shows us the progress of the adversary in the second stage of his activity. Here is something else. The seed secretly scattered, has grown and pierced the barriers of its confinement. It shows itself in a new form. It can not escape the observation of the reader that the work of this rider is on a steady increase. First, it is given to him to take peace from the earth; then that they should slay one another, and finally a great sword is given to him. This last seems to indicate the highest degree of strife and bloodshed here portrayed.

The sword here is called in Greek "*machaira*," and is of the same root and signification as "*mache*," *i. e.*, fight, battle, contention in words.<sup>1</sup> Yea, this sword is even by our Lord used as a figure of strife:<sup>2</sup> "I came not to send peace, but a sword."

With this increase of strife, the visible production of the secret workings of the first rider, the color of this

<sup>1</sup> 2 Tim. ii, 23; Titus iii, 9; James iv, 1.    <sup>2</sup> Matt. x, 34.

second horse agrees. It is red, or as the Greek signifies, fire colored. This color agrees also with the character of this rider, as the color of the first horse agreed with the character of the first rider. We have seen in the dragon this fire color as a fit figure of excitement and wrath. Hence, this color is here befitting to designate a condition of strife. More than this, the nature of this color possesses the peculiarity that it truly represents the transition from the condition of the first rider to the second. The fire color has different hues. The bright shining flame is, if not fully white, at least almost so; but from this white it assumes easily a yellowish and a reddish color, and finally the full fiery red, which describes the highest degree of the condition brought about by this rider.

### THIRD SEAL.

VERSES 5, 6: "And when he opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature saying, Come and see. And I saw, and behold, a black horse; and he that sat thereon had a balance in his hand. And I heard as it were a voice in the midst of the four living creatures, saying, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny, and the oil and the wine hurt thou not."

Our attention is first directed to the color of the horse, which is black. The fire movement, represented by its color, has finished its course, and done its work, transforming itself into black, into the nature and color of coal—the emblem of darkness. With this state of things agrees the saying of the prophet: "Our skin was black, like an oven, because of the terrible famine."<sup>1</sup> How soon was this transformation from white to black brought about! There is but one connecting link between these two.

The purpose of this third rider is to effect a famine, a want of food for men. This, the balance in his hand,

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<sup>1</sup> Lam. v, 10.

and the voice from the midst of the four living creatures indicates, "A measure of wheat for a penny," etc. When food becomes scarce, it is not used at pleasure, but rather sparingly, by closely measuring and weighing the quantities. A material famine may here be implied, but it is evidently not the main purpose of this third rider. The object being, as the two preceding riders have shown, to attack and destroy by delusive means the light and life of the Church. A material famine would hardly seem to be the right means of effecting this. On the contrary, it might have the opposite tendency, and awaken a prayerful spirit and earnest seeking after the Lord, while a famine, or diminution of spiritual food, would be just what the adversary intends to effect, and by which he might easily weaken the light and spiritual health of the believer.

**CHRIST THE WHEAT.**—In regard to such spiritual food, Christ says that he is the corn of wheat, and also the bread of life; and in another parable he likewise represents himself as the wheat and the good seed,<sup>1</sup> which is the word of God.

**THE BARLEY.**—Compared with wheat, barley is an inferior kind of grain, though it is still human food. Barley as a figure apparently points to a kind of food inferior to wheat. Now, where shall we find the key of explanation to these seemingly mysterious figures? In the history of the Judges of these times, Nehemiah says that God gave the Israelites "saviors," who saved them out of the hand of their enemies.<sup>2</sup> As such, a temporal and hence also inferior "savior" of God's people, Gideon is compared to a cake of barley-bread, which comparison even Gideon acknowledges to be ordered of God.<sup>3</sup> If we then place over against this inferior savior our most eminent and divine Savior, Jesus Christ, who presents himself as the wheat and the bread of life, we have a

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xiii; Luke viii, 11. <sup>2</sup> Neh. ix, 27. <sup>3</sup> Jud. vii, 13-15.

Scriptural explanation of these two figures before us, and the true relation of barley to wheat is manifest. Christ, the eternal word of God, is the wheat; hence, "wheat" signifies the pure and genuine word of God, coming directly from God and Christ. "Barley" signifies the word of God lessened and made inferior by human agency, containing divine substance, though not in its original purity and power, but infected with human precepts and tradition. He who feeds his soul with the pure word of God lives on the most superior food; but he who feeds himself with doctrines adulterated by human inventions, and thus containing only parts of the real word of God, lives upon food of a much inferior quality.

There is thus a dearth indicated here, especially in regard to wheat—the pure word of God will become very dear. The Greek measure, *choenix*, contained nearly a quart, and represented the amount of corn for a day's ration; hence, a *choenix* for a penny (or denarius), which usually purchased a bushel, indicated a great scarcity.<sup>1</sup> Even barley, that inferior food, will become very dear, though one penny will buy three times as much barley as wheat. Great as the dearth will be, it will still be possible to live, even to him who is determined to live on wheat, for a penny (denarius) is the daily wages paid to the laborer in the Lord's vineyard.

"And the oil and the wine hurt thou not." Wheat and barley shall be hurt, but not the oil and the wine. The oil is in the Scripture the emblem of unction and of healing.<sup>2</sup> Christ is a Greek word, and means (the) "Anointed," and those who have the Spirit of Christ are hence justly called, "Anointed ones," *i. e.*, Christians. This unction is the Spirit of grace, effecting the work of grace in man. Wine is mentioned in the Scripture in

<sup>1</sup> W. Smith's Bib. Dic., Weights and Measures; See also note 10. <sup>2</sup> Heb. i, 9; Acts x, 38; Mark vi, 13.

its strengthening properties,<sup>1</sup> as also in its exhilarating effects upon the mind.<sup>2</sup> The good Samaritan pours oil and wine in the wounds of him left half dead by the robbers.<sup>3</sup> To both, to oil and wine, are healing properties ascribed, as also the gladdening effect; yet their nature teaches us to make a difference between them. The oil is soft and soothing, and, therefore, first applied to the sufferer. The wine, in its more strengthening qualities, is applied afterward. Oil and wine are thus emblems of the forgiving, reviving, healing, and strengthening grace of God; and the whole tends to show that though this rider shall succeed in making the word of God costly and rare, even in its interpretation by human instrumentalities, yet the pardoning, renewing, gladdening, and strengthening grace of God shall flow undiminished. Only the light, the word of God, in its original brightness, in which it had hitherto shone to the believers, shall suffer and be diminished. Inward life, strength, and joy in the Holy Spirit shall remain unhurt. Not yet shall desolations of death, but only gloom and darkness, set in with this stage, as the black horse fitly signifies.

#### FOURTH SEAL.

VERSES 7, 8: "And when he opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature saying, Come and see. And I saw, and behold a pale horse; and he that sat upon him, his name was Death; and Hades followed with him. And there was given unto them authority over the fourth part of the earth to kill with sword, and with famine, and with death, and by the beasts of the earth."

Here we have the consummation of the work of our riders. This appears from the law of four, as this fourth stage corresponds with the number seven; but it appears also from the color of the horse. "Pale," is whitish, with a slight tinge of green, yellow, or some other color.

<sup>1</sup> 1 Tim. v, 23.

<sup>2</sup> Psal. civ, 15.

<sup>3</sup> Luke x, 30-37.

It is often the remaining part of a faded color. Now, in following the natural formation of the colors of the horses, there remained after the formation into black but one step more to make the destruction complete, viz., to reduce the coal to ashes, by which process the black became whitish or pale, the color of this fourth horse, and the color of death.

But again this rider has a name. A name given by God or the Scripture has a signification. It is a correct designation of the thing thus named. In this respect the coming forth of this rider, with a public declaration of his nature and purpose, is a point in which he is also the fulfillment of the others; for he thus openly expresses what they simply implied or intimated. For instance, the first rider kept his nature and purpose entirely concealed; the two following expressed it merely by figures, but this fourth proclaims it publicly at his entrance on the scene of action. He is "The Death" (*ὁ θάνατος*), *death personified*, riding as the chief hero and master of this stage upon a pale horse. With him Hades, "the kingdom of the dead," follows, with which he completely accomplishes what the three preceding ones only began, or in part achieved.

SIGNIFICATION OF DEATH.—What the Scriptures call "death" is often too much confined to bodily death, while the latter is in fact only a partial and subordinate meaning of the term. In the same degree as the soul or spirit is the most important part of man, is also spiritual death the most important part of death. If Adam's fall had brought upon him and us only bodily death, the world would still be in a happy condition, for then all mankind would still live in communion with God, and brotherly love reign supreme. Death affected not only Adam's body, but also his spirit. Nay, it affected his inner being; his spirit, first, then extended to his body, and thence to the whole creation connected with

him. Death is the consequence of sin. It is the dissolution of the good which God has established in man as "the order of life." Sin being a transgression of this "order of life" causes consequently a dissolution and corruption of this good condition or order of life. This dissolution and corruption is called in the Scriptures "death." Into such a spiritual and bodily death came Adam by his transgression. His intimate relation with God, his peace and joy in God were destroyed, and instead of them came unequilibrium, fear, and estrangement. His whole spiritual constitution lost its equilibrium. Anger was no longer subject to love; the latter no longer to justice; nor did temperance, or ambition, or any other faculty respect its proper bounds and act in concert with the others: but each acted independently of the other, making man a slave to his passions, *i. e.*, subject to vain and perverse desires.

This state of things has passed from Adam upon all men. It has become a law in man, called "the law of sin and of death."<sup>1</sup> Hence this death is not something fleeting and without real foundation in man, but something firmly established in him. True, it has lost its dominion in the believer by the indwelling of the spirit of life in his heart. As long as the believer dwells in this tabernacle of flesh, or body of death, death has access to him. It is an untiring, vexatious antagonist to his inner man, ever keeping its sting (sin) in motion toward him, and threatening destruction. Only by constant watchfulness and prayer may the believer conquer this great enemy.

THE TWO SIGNIFICATIONS OF DEATH TAKEN TOGETHER.—This spiritual death thus exercised by this rider is a mighty lever for the furtherance of evil in the world. It furthers it from the root, and is a chief motive power. It aims at the destruction of every spiritual good, whether

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<sup>1</sup> Rom. viii, 2; vii, 14-25.



brought forth by God through his salvation, or otherwise already existing in the creation. Here Death comes forth also as a furtherer of natural death; and he is, in both together, the greatest, mightiest, and most obstinate enemy in God's universe, the last one that shall be destroyed.<sup>1</sup> Such is "Death," the leading figure of this stage. Besides this his greatness is also specially indicated by the words: "And Hades followed with him."

WHAT IS HADES?—The New Testament uses in the language in which it is originally written three different terms, designating thereby three different places, for which many translations use but the one term "hell." This is much to be regretted, for it deprives those unacquainted with the Greek of the key to the understanding of important Biblical subjects. These three different places are termed:

1. *γέεννα*, *Gehenna*,<sup>2</sup> where human souls and devils (the Devil and his angels) shall suffer the penalty of their sins *after* the judgment-day. Hence *Gehenna* is the everlasting fire,<sup>3</sup> and the lake of fire.

2. *ταρταρος*, *Tartaros*,<sup>4</sup> the place into which the angels that sinned were cast to be reserved unto judgment, hence the place where they are before the judgment-day.<sup>5</sup> This place is also called *Abyss*.<sup>6</sup>

3. *αἴδης*, *Hades*—*i. e.*, the *invisible*, the place where the departed human spirits are *before* the judgment-day.<sup>7</sup> In the Old Testament, which is written in Hebrew, this place is called "*Sheol*,"<sup>8</sup> and has been translated *grave*, *Hell*, etc.

Now, of the two first named we have nothing further to say. The last one, however, *Hades*, the place spoken of in our text, demands a closer, though, owing to the circumstances, a brief consideration.

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. xv, 26. <sup>2</sup> Matt. xviii, 8, 9; Mark ix, 43-48; Luke xii, 5. <sup>3</sup> Rev. xx, 14, 15. <sup>4</sup> 2 Pet. ii, 4. <sup>5</sup> Jude 6. <sup>6</sup> Rev. ix, 11; xvii, 8; xx, 1-3; Luke viii, 31. <sup>7</sup> Luke xvi, 23; Rev. xx, 4. <sup>8</sup> See Ps. xvi, 10, and Acts ii, 27.

It will then be observed that, because sin entered the world, and by sin death, the souls of those who died had to go somewhere, to some region or place. To paradise or heaven they could not go before Christ, the Way and Life, appeared. All who died before him—Enoch and Elijah excepted—were under the power of death until Christ broke that power. Whither did they go, when through death they left this visible scene of action? They went into what the New Testament calls Hades, and what the Old Testament calls Sheol, a region or place in the earth.<sup>1</sup> The reader acquainted with the Bible must have noticed that the believers before Christ died not with that cheerful hope of the spirit with which the Christian dies, but with sadness and gloom in regard to their future prospect. They spoke not of going up to heaven, but of going down into Sheol. Thus Jacob, in refusing to be comforted on account of his son Joseph, says: "I will go down into the Sheol unto my son, mourning;"<sup>2</sup> and Job says: "If I wait, the Sheol is my house;"<sup>3</sup> and the psalmist says: "What man liveth and shall not see death? Shall he deliver his soul from the hand of the Sheol?"<sup>4</sup> Only since Christ came are we made to sit together in heavenly places, not before.<sup>5</sup>

However, it would be far from the truth to conclude that thus all the souls of those who died before Christ were promiscuously thrown together into the same prison. On the contrary, the Scripture plainly indicates that there are different localities in Hades according to the character of its inhabitants. There are the lower parts of the earth;<sup>6</sup> and there is the lowest Sheol.<sup>7</sup> We have a clear example of the manner in which these different localities are occupied.<sup>8</sup> Here it will be seen that all, the rich man, Lazarus, and Abraham, were in Hades; they could see each other plainly and converse, but

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xi, 23; Isa. xiv, 15. <sup>2</sup> Gen. xxxvii, 35. <sup>3</sup> Job xvii, 13. <sup>4</sup> Ps. lxxxix, 48. <sup>5</sup> Eph. ii, 6. <sup>6</sup> Ps. xliii, 9; Eph. iv, 9. <sup>7</sup> Ps. lxxxvi, 13; Deut. xxxii, 22. <sup>8</sup> Luke xvi, 19-31.

Abraham and Lazarus were in the highest region, while the rich man was in the lowest, a great gulf separating the good from the bad.

THE CHANGE EFFECTED IN HADES THROUGH CHRIST.—Even the psalmist declared that while the unbelievers who make wealth their god shall remain in Sheol, the believer shall at a certain time be delivered from its grasp. He says:<sup>1</sup>

“Like sheep laid in the Sheol  
Shall death feed them.  
And the upright shall rule over them in the morning.  
And to consume their form is the Sheol their dwelling.  
But God will redeem my soul from the hand of the Sheol,  
For he shall receive me. Selah.”

When Christ died his soul went the way of those that died before him, into Hades. However, because he was not a sinner, but the Holy One in human frame, death had no power over him. As the Scripture says: “His soul could not be left in Sheol, nor his body see corruption.”<sup>2</sup> No, before him, THE LIFE, Hades and death were entirely powerless; and instead of making him a prisoner, he made them his prisoners. To his infinite supremacy they had to surrender unconditionally. Thus Christ actually obtained the keys of death and Hades—*i. e.*, he got them entirely under his power. He appeared here as the stronger one, entering the strong man’s palace, overcoming him, taking from him all his armor, and dividing his spoils.<sup>3</sup> The power of death and Hades was completely broken; and all the believers who died before Christ and waited in Hades for his appearance were through him made free and brought into the heavenly regions. “Wherefore he saith: When he ascended on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. Now this ‘he ascended,’ what is it, but that he also

<sup>1</sup> Ps. xlix, 14, 15.    <sup>2</sup> Acts ii, 24, 27.    <sup>3</sup> Luke xi, 21, 22; Isa. liii, 12; Col. ii, 15.

descended first into the lower parts of the earth?"<sup>1</sup> In regard to the act itself, in its effect in the visible world, when Christ entered Hades, the Scripture says: "And behold . . . the earth did quake; and the rocks were rent, and the tombs were opened; and many bodies of the saints that had fallen asleep were raised; and coming forth out of the tombs after his resurrection, they entered into the holy city and appeared unto many."<sup>2</sup> The effects of the power of life by which Christ conquered death and Hades are here visible in the shaking of the earth, rending of the rocks, and opening of the tombs, and show that Christ's victory was instantaneous and simultaneous with his death.

For this reason could Christ assure the thief on the cross that he should be with him in paradise that same day; for Christ dying before him, and breaking the power of death and Hades, delivered from that time and henceforth all his believers from that power, carrying them directly from earth into the heavenly regions, a privilege which that repenting thief was probably the first to enjoy.

**HADES A DESTRUCTIVE POWER.**—These remarks enable us to get a proper knowledge of Hades. We know what it was before Christ's death and what it is since. It is now the dwelling place and prison to which all departed unbelievers go, and where their souls are kept until the judgment day. On that day shall also Hades, as a reservoir of souls, deliver up the dead which are in it.<sup>3</sup> What an immense number it must contain! What an immense kingdom this Hades must be, over which death, as its ruler, stretches its mighty scepter!

Death and Hades are in a certain sense two, but in another sense only one; how they unite their efforts for the same purpose is another question. We know what death does, what destructive influence it exercises, but

<sup>1</sup> Eph. iv, 8-10.    <sup>2</sup> Matt. xxvii, 51-53.    <sup>3</sup> Rev. xx, 13, 14.

what can Hades do? Is it also able to exercise a destructive influence upon men, and even upon the Church of God? To answer this question in the negative would be as much as to say that Hades here is an unmeaning, empty figure; but to answer it in the affirmative seems to maintain something which will call forth contradiction. What then can be accepted as real truth? It is this:

1. As Hades consists of none but those who on earth have assumed a position opposed to the kingdom of God, and as bodily death does not change a man's heart, it is evident that all who are in Hades will there be what they were here on earth, viz., opposers to the kingdom of God. Hence, Hades is under its ruler, "death," a kingdom opposed to the kingdom of God.

2. When Christ says of this mighty kingdom of Hades that its gates shall not prevail against his Church,<sup>1</sup> does this declaration not imply a clear intimation that Hades is capable of exercising a very threatening influence against the Church of Christ?

3. Do not such instances, reported in the Old Testament, of communicating with the dead,<sup>2</sup> and where the departed Samuel actually speaks, and in our time such men as E. Swedenborg, the somnambulists, and the well known spiritists, show that an intercourse between the material and spiritual sphere is possible? For, though much and most of what the spiritists pretend to perform is empty play, without real foundation, yet not all is without foundation. It certainly is to be considered as a sign of the times that men are turning away from God's revealed truth, and with great eagerness, nay, as by force, endeavor to penetrate into the forbidden sphere of the kingdom of the dead to get light and instruction from spirits estranged from God and his saving truth. In one word, they place themselves obediently under the

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<sup>1</sup> Matt. xvi, 18.    <sup>2</sup> Deut. xviii, 11.

influence of Hades to serve as instruments of this kingdom.

4. As the times just before the coming of Christ will be the most terrible that ever were and shall be, when the dragon, the beast from the abyss, and the false prophet shall manifest their greatest power, may it not be expected that also then Hades will exercise its corrupting influence in a degree never known before?

ACTIVITY OF THIS COMBINED POWER.—Concerning death and Hades it is said: “And power (or authority) was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth.” In this grant of power, this rider again excels his predecessors. None of the latter had “power given to him.” The first, indeed, had a permitted success: “a crown was given to him.” To the second it was simply “given” to take peace from the earth. The third had neither of the two first, hence this fourth excels them all by doing his work authoritatively to the extent named, and by four different instrumentalities:

1. “To kill with the sword.”—In “killing,” too, this rider excels the others; for they merely indirectly aimed at killing, and rather prepared the way for it, while this one does it directly and openly. The sword here differs from that of the second rider; it is not the *machaira*, but the *romphaia*, i. e., a great, broad sword, carried by barbarians upon the shoulder. This seems to indicate that the sword wielded by this rider shall in consequence of his more powerful position be more formidable than that of the second rider. It signifies especially war.

2. “And with famine.”—This was the instrumentality of the third rider, but is used here by this fourth with more powerful effect, viz., directly to kill.

3. “And with death.”—This is this fourth rider’s own instrumentality, and comprises pestilence, and the whole host of innumerable diseases which prey upon the human system. The suicides also come under this cate-

gory. Moreover all the various fatal accidents, which with the course of human progress increase in form and number are added.

4. "And by the beasts of the earth."—This means not directly the wild beasts of the earth, as lions, tigers, etc., but men, who singly or united into bands and corporations, act like beasts, *i. e.*, without regard to right and reason, but merely incited by passion. Of beasts in this sense, the Scripture makes mention of certain men present at the crucifixion of Christ, calling them bulls, dogs, lions, etc.<sup>1</sup> So have the beasts described by Daniel and the Revelation as political corporations the same meaning. They are beasts of the earth, because they know no higher origin nor higher motive than the earth.

THE WORK OF THE FOUR RIDERS TOGETHER.—That these four riders act in the interest of the adversary is obvious. It is not an open, undissembled opposition. Unlike that of the beast, which opposes God's work by downright unbelief and undisguised enmity, it is a secret opposition by dissimulation, where evil is introduced under the form of goodness and truth. It is, therefore, that opposition described by our Lord as the chief opposition for this period of the Gospel.<sup>2</sup> Here the devil is sowing his evil seed among the wheat, and it grows in close proximity to the latter, scarcely distinguishable from it, and a constant grievance and opposition to it until the harvest. These four riders represent this whole work of the devil from the beginning to the end. Hence, this work is in its four stages *the fundamental work* of the successful opposition of Satan against the Church of God in this period. For this reason does it constitute the Base of the Revelation. What the Lord says of the course of development of the good seed, is also applicable to the evil seed which grows and ripens along with

<sup>1</sup> Psa. xxii, 13-22; lxviii, 30.    <sup>2</sup> Matt. xiii, 24-30.

the good.<sup>1</sup> In the first stage the seed is cast into the ground, where it grows hidden from the sight of man. Then, in the second stage, it makes itself visible as the blade (the sword of the second rider). In the third stage it appears as the empty ear (hunger). In the fourth the full corn in the ear and near the harvest.

What are the four riders themselves? Figures? Certainly, and very probably even more: living realities, evil angels, carrying out the counsel of the Almighty so far as evil may serve his purpose.

#### FIFTH SEAL.

VERSES 9-11: "And when he opened the fifth seal, I saw underneath the altar the souls of them that had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held: and they cried with a great voice, saying, How long, O Master, the holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And there was given them, to each one a white robe; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little time, until their fellow-servants also and their brethren, which should be killed even as they were, should be fulfilled."

That which this seal represents to us is simply the result of the activity of the four riders. The altar here is a very significant figure. Even from the earliest times it was the external sign of worship, around which the worshipers of the true God gathered. Abraham built an altar wherever he went and dwelt in Canaan. Israel had an altar. The Christians also have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat who merely serve the external tabernacle. The altar of the Christians is in the upper sanctuary, and is the true altar; standing before God, and strictly taken, it is Christ. The Christians are a priestly race and servants of this altar. Accordingly, their proper position would be standing before the altar and serving in their priestly attire and full dignity.

<sup>1</sup> Mark iv, 26-28.



Instead of this, however, we see them killed according to the body, and only living according to their souls; and besides this, underneath the altar, and waiting for the manifestation of God's judgment for the deliverance of his holy cause, and for the punishment of the wicked.

This is a figure of the condition of the faithful at that time. To be sure, the Church of God at that time still exists. The gates of Hades did not prevail against her; but *visibly* she exists only in the wilderness, in the place prepared by God for her. Within the dominion of the antichrist she exists only according to her soul, in earnest expectation of the coming of the Lord. Externally, she will there have no visibility or corporality. The souls underneath the altar are therefore a very important figure in regard to this most calamitous condition, and that, so much the more, because they are, as a figure in themselves, also living realities greatly valued by God. Besides this, this seal teaches us the following facts:

1. The coming of the Lord will take place at a later time than not only men on earth, but even the saints in paradise, expect.

2. The saints separated from the body, as souls, do not sleep, but are in a condition of full consciousness. It is their body that sleeps.

3. They have even a certain knowledge of the condition of things on the earth.

4. They are in a condition of earnest expectation, waiting for the appearance of the Lord to judge the wicked, and to avenge the blood of the saints.

5. They are in a condition of enjoyment and able to appreciate prerogatives, as it appears from the white robe given to each of them, in order to lighten their longer waiting.

6. Even in the very last times there shall be many martyrs for Christ.

7. The idea that the Church shall be taken away

from the earth *before* the beginning of this great tribulation, is from this point of view directly refuted.

#### SIXTH SEAL.

As this seal does not present any thing in figures, but expresses every thing by direct terms, there is no need of explaining these terms. Having thus the signification of this seal plainly stated before us, we are ready to enter upon

#### THE APPLICATION OF THESE SEALS TO THE HISTORY OF OUR PERIOD.

First to be considered here is

THE NEW POSITION WHICH THE CHURCH ASSUMED SINCE THE TIME OF CHRIST.—As remarked before, it is only *with* Christ that the Church attains real existence; and is from that time called “his body,”<sup>1</sup> having its existence out of Christ’s spiritual nature as the glorified Son of man through his resurrection from the dead. Thus the divine party, or Church, experiences here a very great and eminent change, before which the aurora, her first stage, disappears; and also the moon, her second stage, appears in a subordinate position—viz., under her feet. For being at this time arrayed with the sun, she arose to a much higher position. This sun-nature is Christ’s nature, and serves not only to array the Church, but is also her inner and new nature. It is that true light and also that divine life thus described: “In him was life, and the life was the light of men.”<sup>2</sup> That this new equipment and position of the Church must have appeared extremely dangerous to the adversary is obvious; and if he intended further to continue the conflict, he had necessarily to change his position and tactics; for from this time he was compelled to fight against this twofold power of light and life of God, which were from that time

<sup>1</sup> Eph. i, 23.    <sup>2</sup> John i, 4, 9.

directed against him. Hence we see from this what plan or method he was compelled to follow in this, our period—viz., to bring into the Church of God darkness and death in order to quench by it the light and life of God. This was a task, the idea of which would have struck any intelligent creature with horror; but not Satan. Though well knowing that his strength is far too small to engage in an open conflict, he is not discouraged. The old liar thinks of deceitful means: he uses subtilty and dissimulation, as we shall see in the first four seals.

FIRST SEAL.—According to the nature of the Base, the seals represent the fundamental features of our history. By this they designate not so much single events as divisions of times in their general historical character. Hence the first seal describes *the beginning* of the history of our period in its fundamental features. The real beginning of the new nature and life is the day of Pentecost. Then did God pour out the holy Spirit of light and life into the hearts of the believers; and just as God did then establish his Church she ought to have continued, holding fast to all the doctrines of Christ and the apostles as originally delivered. No impurity, no deviation whatever from the simple truth of the Gospel ought ever to have found room in her. However, as the Lord intimates to us, the enemy was not willing to leave the field of the Lord with its good seed alone. He soon had a plan matured, and then probably did not wait long to begin his work of malice. He did it while men were sleeping—by night—and even in the daytime, if he only could do it unobserved. Some single proofs of the growth of this seed could already be seen during the life-time of the apostles; but after that they gradually became more numerous and strong. When we consider the first three centuries, or the times from that day of Pentecost to the Emperor Constantine, there could certainly no other figure more truly portray the general character of this space

of time than the first seal with its rider on the white horse. Here is the seed of darnel secretly sowed among the wheat, and close to it. Here it grows and forms the beginning and the foundation of what in later times assumes the shape of great evils. Here the first gradual change in color from the pure and true Christianity to the impure and false takes place, which only a keen observer is able to discern. In the second and third century these deviations from the original light and pure Gospel become more and more manifest by the general increase of foolish speculation in heathen philosophy and a mixture of it with Christianity under the name of *Gnosis*—i. e., knowledge, also called Gnosticism, one of the most extended and delusive heresies known. In addition to this, the third century is known for the introduction of new things, as the episcopate, sub-deacons, exorcists, etc. Unusual efficacy is ascribed to baptism, and infant communion practiced. All these and other errors have literally crept into the Church, have stealthily, noiselessly, and under the garb of Christian development gained general ground. Thus the transition from the “white” of the first rider to the “red” of the second was accomplished without being really perceived by the great majority. All was done under the color of innocence and purity, and the declaration verified: “And there was given unto him a crown, and he went forth conquering and to conquer.”

THE SECOND SEAL, with the rider on the fire-colored horse, is a clear representation of a division of our period, beginning with the Emperor Constantine. It is the further development of the evil seed of the first rider. Here the false doctrines pierce the ground (as blades), and show themselves. Here come the times of discussions and strifes, and with them the councils designed to settle the controversies, but which seemed only to draw the party lines more distinct, and to fire the partisans with greater

zeal to hold to their opinions. This is literally an epoch where peace is taken away, and where strife and bloodshed rule in its stead. Here the so-called Christians begin to persecute one another; and the blood of the first martyrs is shed by the so-called Christian authorities, and soon larger numbers suffer the same fate. It is a state of great war, not less in the literal sense of the term than for the settling of doctrinal questions.

Certain errors came up under the first rider, yet without causing much ado; while those of this second rider cause an immense stir throughout the whole Church. Up to this time the Christians were, among themselves, generally at peace. One cause of this was, that so long as they were separated from the state and persecuted by it, they had less occasion to fall out among themselves; but after the state and the Church became united, the great war among the professors of Christianity, portrayed by the great sword given to the second rider, became a fact.

THE THIRD SEAL, with the rider on the black horse, represents that division of our period generally termed the Middle Ages: hence beginning toward the end of the sixth century, and reaching to the first movements of that great event called the Reformation. Whoever is acquainted with history will see that the figures of this seal find in a striking manner their realization in this division of our period. Here darkness breaks in, represented by the black horse and the famine. The light which has hitherto generally shone among the professors of Christ begins visibly to decrease, while ignorance and spiritual darkness are increasing. The Word of God, which is the light as well as the food for man, becomes scarce and dear. Only a comparatively small number—some dissenting and decried bodies, as the Waldenses and others—are enjoying it, and feed on its divine strength. To the great mass in the so-called Catholic Church, in-

cluding even Church officers, the Bible is an unknown thing, hence preaching and teaching consists not of truths directly gathered from the Bible, but merely of sayings traditionally received from others. Of course, they may yet contain food for the soul; but it is unquestionably of an inferior nature compared with the direct teachings of the Bible, which are the full Word of God.

THE OIL AND THE WINE.—It is well known that in spite of this prevailing darkness, and the scarcity of the Word of God in what was then called “the Church,” the enjoyment of spiritual graces, the direct support of the inward, spiritual life, were not injured or diminished. For besides the numerous ascetic orders which separated themselves from the world and sought the undisturbed communion with God and the blessings of the Holy Spirit, there were a number of others in that Church, called mystics, who enjoyed the same blessings of spiritual life. At all events, their writings, yet extant, prove this beyond any doubt; yea, one is inclined to suppose that they herein not only equaled, but even excelled most of their fellow-Christians living before and after them.

THE FOURTH SEAL with the rider on the pale horse—its application to history. As the third seal reaches to the end of the Middle Ages, the time of the beginning of this fourth rider may be placed at the first movements of the Reformation, for there the Middle Ages end. As the nature of the number “four” teaches us that it is in itself, to a certain degree, the fulfillment of the three preceding ones, and forming a whole by itself, it thus completes the general representation of the counteraction of the adversary for this whole period, and hence extends its potency even to the sixth seal. From this it is evident that this fourth rider’s activity includes the time from the beginning of the Reformation to the com-

ing of the Lord. Consequently also the times in which we live, and the things occurring before our own eyes and ears, are figuratively expressed by this fourth rider. How strange! How can it be possible that times enlightened as ours are properly represented by death on the pale horse with the kingdom of the dead following with him! Yet this is in truth the figure by which God represents to his servants the activity of the adversary party from the Reformation to the coming of the Lord. If this should not appear as clearly to the reader as the application of the three preceding riders to their respective histories, let him carefully consider the following points:

1. Through the Reformation a new and powerful stimulant to life was brought into the Church of God. Though a certain reaction followed the Reformation, new life appeared and unfolded continual growing and very far extending activity, such as the world has never yet seen, and as it to-day is manifest before the eyes of the world in a living Christianity, in daily life, at home and in the Church, in missions among the heathen and civilized nations, in the formation of various institutions and numerous associations for the propagation of Christianity, in all the branches of human society.

2. Must not necessarily such an extraordinary unfolding of life and activity also stimulate the adversary party to effect an energetic unfolding of death? Will not also the adversary, against the highest life and the greatest activity which the Church ever unfolded, make the mightiest antagonist of life—death—his ally, and, if possible, secure the services of the greatest kingdom existing, viz., the kingdom of the dead?

3. Let us see what has already been done, and what is effected before our eyes through spiritual death. How very much have the religious conditions in Europe changed during the last thirty years! In the state

Churches, Protestant and Catholic, faith has notably decreased—a deadening influence, arising from the root of infidelity, is generally prevailing and on the increase. Even among religious bodies, which rigidly insist upon spiritual life, and in this, our part of the world, we see this spiritual life in a vigorous conflict with spiritual death. There are, indeed, great and glorious victories achieved by Christian warriors; but we also see not a few of them stagger and fall. We observe in but a small number that which the Lord so specially recommends to his followers: “To endure to the end.” Again the ease with which strong Churches may in a short time be divided or rent in twain, is likewise a point that can not be left unnoticed. Moreover, the rise of so many new sects under a sign and name indicating life, while in reality death is lurking behind it, is a significant sign of the times. True, it may be said, that this was so in former times. We admit it; but not to such an extent as now, and as it will appear in future, that, according to our Lord’s own declaration, only one-half of those professing to belong to him will be acknowledged by him as his own. For there shall of ten virgins, waiting for his coming, only five be accepted. Further, concerning this condition he significantly says: “Howbeit when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on earth?”<sup>1</sup> In all this the success of spiritual death may be seen working dissolution and destruction after the manner of the false prophet, under a whitish color, inclined toward green, thus pretending to bring light and life. In this deception his success must be so much greater, as this seems, compared with the preceding rider, a going out from darkness into light and life.

Natural death will do its full share to make the figures portraying the history of this division of our

<sup>1</sup> Luke xviii, 8.



period, terrible realities. In spite of the increased enlightenment since the Reformation, and of the prevailing opinion that war is wrong, and that questions of dispute ought by intelligent Christian nations to be settled otherwise than by the sword, war has with apparent animosity been waged by what were thought to be the most enlightened people. So have famines, diseases, contagious disorders, accidents, revolutions, mutinies, murders, etc., not diminished, but are rather on the increase. Nor will there be a decrease of action in these destroying means, but, on the contrary, an increase until the climax is reached, for God has described these times as the unfolding of death in its greatest power, and under four principal forms to the end of our period. Now if we in our times hear the numerous reports of destruction of human lives in various ways, let us remember that we even just *now* are under the dominion of this fourth rider, and that *now* is fulfilled and actually coming to pass that which God long ago made known to us in his revelation: a special angel of death, nay *Death personified*, to whom authority is given over the fourth part of the earth to kill by four different chief means, is carrying out his work of destruction right before our eyes and ears, with Hades as helper.

THE FIFTH SEAL covers a future part of our period beginning with the seventh bowl,<sup>1</sup> where that great revolution is taking place, the like of which was not "since there were men upon the earth;" where Babylon the great falls, and where all the hitherto existing religious and civil institutions shall be overthrown. This is the time when the beast will come up out of the abyss, and, hence, also the time when the last great tribulation for God's people will begin. Here the last martyrs will be added to the number of their brethren. Here, in this division of our period only, will the antichrist, that man

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<sup>1</sup>Rev. xvi, 17-21.

of sin, arise, who will not die from age or any other cause; but the Lord Jesus shall slay him with the breath of his mouth, and bring him to naught by the manifestation of his coming.<sup>1</sup> When this man of sin appears, then will the day of the Lord and the end of this division of our period be not far off. Concerning this time of tribulation, and of this man of sin, Daniel expresses himself thus: "And I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the Most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom. And he (the anti-christ) shall speak (great) words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time."<sup>2</sup> Matthew also, the base of the Gospels, describes this division of our period in the words of the Lord, thus: "For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines and pestilences and earthquakes in divers places. But all these things are the beginning of travail. Then shall they deliver you up unto tribulation and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake. And then shall many stumble, and shall deliver up one another, and shall hate one another. And many false prophets shall arise, and shall lead many astray. And because iniquity shall be multiplied, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved."<sup>3</sup> Also the parable of the Lord refers to this time. Upon this follows

THE SIXTH SEAL. Rev. vi, 12-17: "And I saw when he opened the sixth seal, and there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as a sackcloth of hair, and the

<sup>1</sup> 2 Thess. ii, 3-8.

<sup>2</sup> Dan. vii, 21, 22, 25.

<sup>3</sup> Matt. xxiv, 7, 13, 28.

whole moon became as blood; and the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, as a fig-tree casteth her unripe figs, when she is shaken of a great wind. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it was rolled up; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the princes, and the chief captains, and the rich, and the strong, and every bondman and freeman, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains; and they say to the mountains and to the rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of their wrath is come; and who is able to stand?"

The first four seals have shown us the course of development of evil in the external sphere of the Church of God during our period. The fifth and sixth seals show us the condition and behavior of the Church and her author toward the development of evil. The fifth seal shows us the Church of God in the deepest tribulation and crying to God for the manifestation of his judgment on the wicked; and in this sixth seal we see the manifestation of this judgment: The appearing of the great day of God, the Almighty.

NOT A FIGURATIVE REPRESENTATION.—As already intimated, the Lord expresses here every thing in direct language. Other events he has clothed in figures, in order to keep their signification hid to certain men until the time when they shall happen; but an event like the day of the Lord requires no such hiding of its meaning, for with all the prescience and power that men might acquire, they would never be able to prevent or alter any thing in this event, so that it should not come to pass as stated beforehand. The Lord also wills it that his coming and this great day of judgment and destruction of the wicked from the earth be clearly understood by all men. For this reason he will not make it known by figures, but by its own stern and terrible realities.

A DIVISION OF OUR PERIOD OF ONE GREAT DAY OF GOD.—Each of the preceding seals represented a certain division of our period, and the third and the fourth were very large divisions. Compared with these this sixth division is rather small, for it contains, as we see, but one day. However, if only one, it is not to be considered a common day, but one very extraordinary and alone of its kind, of which the one in the time of Joshua, when the sun and the moon stood still, is a type. Judging from all the circumstances, we may safely conclude that this day implies, in regard to time, many days—a time when it shall be neither day nor night;<sup>1</sup> and it will surely appear to the wicked, then living, a long time. It is also evident that the events which are taking place here are of such great importance that they not only equal those in the preceding divisions, but by far excel them. Therefore this seal excels in importance all the preceding ones.

FUNDAMENTAL FEATURES, OR MAIN EVENTS OF THE DAY OF THE LORD.—The events here stated are from the standpoint of the Base, fundamental features of every thing that comes to pass. Their fundamental signification is manifest; for they go to the foundation of things. They shake heaven and earth. They overthrow the whole state of things hitherto existing, make an end of the dominion of sin and unrighteousness, and open the way to the reign of righteousness and peace.

The first thing stated is a great earthquake. The greatness of this shaking is seen in the fact that it not only seizes the earth, but also the visible and material heaven, as Jesus already said to his disciples: “And the powers of the heavens shall be shaken.”<sup>2</sup> It is, therefore, concerning the earth; not only a certain country, or a great part of the earth, but the whole earth which shall be terribly shaken. Isaiah describes these

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<sup>1</sup> Zech. xiv, 7.    <sup>2</sup> Matt. xxiv, 29.

times and this event thus: "For the windows from on high are open, and the foundations of the earth do shake. The earth is utterly broken down, the earth is thoroughly split,\* the earth is moved exceedingly. The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard," etc.<sup>1</sup>

"And the sun became black as a sackcloth of hair, and the whole moon became as blood."

It is well known that sometimes spots appear in the sun. They have even been seen with the naked eye. By means of telescopes there are frequently many of these spots of different sizes seen. Small as they appear from the earth, the real size of some is such that they excel in extent the whole surface of the earth. Concerning their origin nothing certain is known, but the pictures which the astronomers give us of these spots answer literally the description of our text.

On the day of the Lord, the sun, at least so far as it is facing the earth, shall assume such a black hue—a fact beforehand determined and made known by God; hence it is said of that day that "there shall be no light, but cold and frost."<sup>2</sup> As it is declared that from this time on, during the millennium and to the end of the world, the sun and the moon shall exercise a much greater influence upon the earth than heretofore, it is evident that this darkening of the sun and the bloody appearance of the moon are not subordinate disturbances on the surface of these bodies, but rather essential changes, in consequence of which these bodies affect the earth with a sevenfold greater influence.

VERSE 13: "And the stars of the heaven fell unto the earth, as a fig-tree casteth her unripe figs, when she is shaken of a great wind."

That the stars of the heaven shall fall to the earth has already been testified by Jesus to his disciples.<sup>3</sup>

\* Literally, to the margin. <sup>1</sup> Isa. xxiv, 18-20. <sup>2</sup> Zech. xiv, 6, in the margin; see, also, Joel ii, 2. <sup>3</sup> Matt. xxiv, 29.

Peter also speaks of it. The "dissolution of the heavens by fire, and the elements melting with fervent heat,"<sup>1</sup> refer to the heavenly bodies, the stars, which burning, melting, and dissolving shall fall to the earth. Notice, they shall not fall in the condition in which they now are, but dissolved by fire and heat.<sup>2</sup> Isaiah also speaks of this event thus: "And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll: and all their host shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the vine, and as a falling fig from the fig-tree."<sup>3</sup> Further it is stated:

VERSE 14: "And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled up."

The first question here is, Which heaven is meant? It is manifestly not that heaven which God created in the beginning, before the earth;<sup>4</sup> but the heaven which he afterward made, on the second day, placing in it on the fourth day the sun, the moon, and the stars. It is the visible, material heaven, described by Peter as passing away by being dissolved in its elements through fire, and sorely affecting the earth.

There is a mysterious hint in regard to this heaven in that God testified after each day's work was done "that it was good," but after the second day's work, when he made this heaven, he leaves out this testimony. Peter also indicates that in these heavens that now are, righteousness does not dwell;<sup>5</sup> and Paul declares that our real conflict consists against the evil spirits in heavenly places.<sup>6</sup> According to this there is some manifest reason why this heaven is here, in the manner indicated, put away. To understand further how this heaven shall depart as a scroll when it is rolled up, we must closely consider how it was made. Moses describes it thus: The waste and empty earth was covered all over with water. The im-

<sup>1</sup> 2 Pet. iii, 10, 12. <sup>2</sup> See note 11. <sup>3</sup> Isa. xxxiv, 4. <sup>4</sup> Gen. i, 1. <sup>5</sup> 2 Pet. iii, 7, 13. <sup>6</sup> Eph. vi, 12; ii, 2.

mense depth or height of these waters may be perceived from God's command, which was that there be an expansion (firmament) in the midst of these waters thus covering the earth; consequently these waters were pushed away from the earth in every direction, and thus a great space was made between the earth and them. (There remained a part of the waters lying on the earth.) By far the greater part of them were thus driven very far outward from the earth, and remained there as the boundary of this expansion or heaven. They were still there in the times of the psalmist,<sup>1</sup> and are most certainly there to-day. Inside of this expansion thus formed, God placed on the fourth day the sun, and the moon, and the stars.

From this, then, appears the unmeasurable greatness and extent of this expansion, as also the immense depth or height of the waters which must have covered the earth. This expansion has formerly been called "firmament," but God and Moses call it "expansion" and "heaven." Of this heaven it is said in our sixth seal: "It departed as a scroll, when it is rolled up." A scroll thus rolled up grows smaller in circumference; it moves *inward*, and this is meant here of heaven. Its present boundaries will therefore then separate themselves and depart from their present locality, where they had for so long a time a firm stand, and they will move inward, nearer toward the earth. Consequently this heaven will grow smaller in circumference, and close more tightly in around the earth. The preceding dissolution and falling of the stars to the earth is doubtless a cause why this heaven so soon departs from its present boundary and moves inward. From this we also see that the stars, which are here falling to the earth, must be those which are in the outer part of this heaven. A division of our visible heaven into many heavens is Scriptural, because

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<sup>1</sup>Ps. cxlviii, 4.

the Scripture very often uses the expression "heavens" for the one visible heaven.

A NEW HEAVEN AND A NEW EARTH.—Through this change of the heaven, as also through the change before intimated in the sun and in the moon, together with those which the earth shall experience by that great earthquake and the operations of divine powers on her, is therefore this heaven, since that time called "a new heaven," and the earth "a new earth;"<sup>1</sup> but this is to be well distinguished from the new heaven and new earth in Rev. xxi.

"And every mountain and island were moved out of their places." As the stars are shaken out of their places, so every mountain and island on earth. Understand it well. These are not figurative descriptions, but simple statements of facts. This is such a terrible shaking of heaven and earth that it surpasses our conception.<sup>2</sup> In consequence of such events it is not to be wondered at that the unbelieving men on earth know not what to do, as Jesus already said: "And there shall be signs in sun and moon and stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, in perplexity for the roaring of the sea and the billows; men fainting for fear and for expectation of the things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of the heavens shall be shaken."<sup>3</sup> John further states:

VERSES 15-17: "And the kings of the earth, and the princes, and the chief captains, and the rich, and the strong, and every bondman and freeman, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains; and they say to the mountains and to the rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of their wrath is come; and who is able to stand?"

It will be understood from a former explanation,<sup>4</sup> and from what is said here, that these kings, and princes, etc.,

<sup>1</sup> 2 Pet. iii, 13; Isa. lxxv, 17; lxxvi, 22. <sup>2</sup> Heb. xii, 26.

<sup>3</sup> Luke xxi, 25, 26. <sup>4</sup> Soprano, Rev. xiv, 20.



are not in their own countries and homes, but are under the antichrist gathered in the land of Idumea, in the valley of decision, whither the Lord did lead them after they had besieged and taken Jerusalem and brought about there the abomination of desolations. Idumea or Edom is a country of mountains and rocks, and its inhabitants lived almost exclusively in caves and in dwellings hewn out of the rocks. "Everywhere we meet with caves and grottoes hewn in the soft sandstone strata. Those at Petra are well known. The nature of the climate, the dryness of the soil, and their great size, render them healthy, pleasant, and commodious habitations, while their security made them specially suitable to a country exposed in every age to incessant attacks of robbers."<sup>1</sup> This country is the place of meeting, and the great wine-press of the wrath of God, whither the Lord shall gather the grapes of the vine of the earth—the nations under the antichrist—and where they shall be trodden. It is to these kings, princes, etc., and to this locality, that our text refers. To the earth in general, at that time, the prophecy of Jeremiah refers, which ought to be read.<sup>2</sup>

**THE TIME OF BEGINNING OF THIS SEAL.**—Consider strictly how Christ describes the times of the fifth seal as the times of great tribulation for his people;<sup>3</sup> and then how he introduces the beginning of this sixth seal thus: "But immediately after the tribulation of those days, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken."<sup>4</sup> Quite suddenly, at once (as the Greek of "immediately" implies) shall the day of the Lord begin, after this future desolation of Jerusalem. The preceding great tribulation is the sign

<sup>1</sup> W. Smith's Dic. of the Bible, Edomites. <sup>2</sup> Jer. xxv, 30-38. <sup>3</sup> Matt. xxiv, 3-28. <sup>4</sup> Matt. xxiv, 29; Mark xiii, 24-29, etc.

given by the Lord from which we shall know the immediate nearness of his coming, as it may be known from a fig-tree, when its branch is tender and putteth forth leaves, that the Summer is nigh.

The designation of human society, as it shall consist at that time, shows us seven classes: kings, princes, military chiefs, rich men, strong men, bondmen, and freemen. This is in contradiction to the idea of liberty and full equality of the socialists of our times. It is an evidence that their great master, that spirit, that shall come up out of the abyss, having obtained the reins of dominion, shall, instead of the expected liberty and equality, establish the worst servitude and tyranny which the world ever saw.

The terror which seizes these armies together is indescribably great. The immense shaking of heaven and earth, the darkening of the sun and the moon, and the stars falling to the earth, must be terrible beyond measure. Still more terrific will be the appearing of the sign of the Son of man in heaven,<sup>1</sup> which is probably the appearance of the majesty of the throne of God and the Lamb.<sup>2</sup> This majesty and the rays of wrath beaming forth from the face of him sitting on the throne, and the Lamb with his seven fold light and equal power of God likewise manifesting wrath, is unbearable to these men. They seek to hide themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains. They desire even that the mountains and rocks fall on them to hide them from the united wrath of God and the Lamb. In all their bitter enmity to God and their boundless arrogance, they are yet compelled to acknowledge God's power and the Lamb's office to judge, and that finally the long announced day of the wrath of God and the Lamb has come, where it is not possible for unreconciled persons to stand, and still less for God's enemies.

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<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxiv, 30; Rev. i, 7.      <sup>2</sup> Rev. v, 6.

WHY NO MENTION IS MADE OF THE BELIEVERS.—During all these mighty events there is nothing mentioned of the believers; and why? Because all this is not for them, but for the unbelievers. The believers are at the beginning of these events raised from the dead, and the living (believers) changed in a moment, and together caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, and so be forever with the Lord<sup>1</sup> in heaven; and, as we shall see in another place, they shall appear with the Lord for this judgment and bodily destruction of the wicked. To the believer the coming of the Lord and this day is not a terror, but a joy. It is for them the day of redemption, when they are called upon by the Lord to look up and lift up their heads, because their redemption draweth nigh.<sup>2</sup>

A SHORT RÉSUMÉ OF THE BASE.—The Base begins the representation of its history, not from the times of Adam, but from the times of Christ, when, through the Holy Spirit, new light and life was brought into the divine party, and when the latter assumed a new position as the Church of God actually formed. The Base contains the period from Christ's first to his second coming, and represents the fundamental features of the history of this period, showing us,

*First, What Satan shall do in this Period*, how he shall, under four riders, one going forth after the other, unfold his work of darkness and death in the sphere of the Church of God. There appears at the opening of the first seal the first rider under the color of light. Great success crowns his activity. Then comes, at the opening of the second seal, a second rider, developing that which was begun in the gentle light into a red glowing flame of strife and bloodshed. Then follows, at the opening of the third seal, a third rider, stirring the burning fire until the object aimed at is reduced to the

<sup>1</sup> 1 Thess. iv, 15-18.    <sup>2</sup> Luke xxi, 28.

blackness of coal, in consequence of which famine and darkness become dominant, and divine light and life are endangered. Finally, at the opening of the fourth seal, follows the fourth rider—death personified—accompanied by Hades, the kingdom of the dead. Through the united efforts of “death and Hades” the work of darkness and death reaches the highest stage, increasing in strength and efficacy until the coming of the Lord. These four seals represent the entire work of Satan in its fundamental features, or from a general point of view during our whole period. The Base also shows us,

*Secondly, What the Church of God shall do.*—After this work of wickedness has fully reached its fourth stage, there follows the fifth seal, representing the last and severe times of tribulation, when the Church in her oppressed condition shall cry to her Lord for a speedy deliverance, which he will grant, and then appear with her thus fully redeemed for the destruction of the wicked, which judgment is represented under the sixth seal.

#### THE POSITION OF THE BASE TO THE TWO PARTS YET FOLLOWING: THE ALTO AND TENOR.

It is evident from this explanation of the Base, that the whole history of our period—from Christ’s first to his second coming—is divided into six divisions; and the peculiar characteristics of these divisions as fundamental features, or a general representation of our history, will further appear to be found in perfect harmony with the specific history of the Alto and Tenor, now to be considered. Nay, this arrangement, given us by God himself, will prove to us a shining and leading light, showing us as well the true order of time, as also in no small degree the true explanation of the prefigured events.

These six divisions, which in the consideration of the

Alto and Tenor appear as a leading light, are the following:

**I. THE TIMES IN WHICH THE ADVERSARY SOWS HIS SEED.**

From the Times of the Apostles to the Emperor  
Constantine.

Generally represented under the *first* seal and first rider.

**II. THE TIMES OF STRIFES AND BLOODSHED.**

From Constantine to the Beginning of the Middle Ages.

Generally represented under the *second* seal and rider.

**III. THE TIMES OF FAMINE AND DARKNESS.**

From the Beginning of the Middle Ages to the First Move-  
ments for a Reformation.

Generally represented under the *third* seal and rider.

**IV. THE TIMES INFLUENCED BY DEATH AND HADES.**

From the Beginning of the First Movements of the Refor-  
mation to the end of our Period.

Generally represented under the *fourth* seal and rider.

**V. THE TIMES OF GREAT TRIBULATION FOR THE  
CHURCH OF GOD.**

From the Seventh Bowl to the Coming of the Lord.

Generally represented under the *fifth* seal.

**VI. THE DAY OF THE LORD.**

Generally represented under the *sixth* seal.

Then shall we further consider the closing part of  
the Revelation as a

**SEVENTH DIVISION, AND THE NEW TIMES:**

The Seasons of Refreshing from the Presence of the Lord.

The Millennium and the Times indicated from the Twentieth  
Chapter of Revelation to the end of that Book.

# THE ALTO

OF THE

## HISTORY OF OUR PRESENT PERIOD.

A Specific Representation

OF THIS HISTORY FROM THE TIMES OF CHRIST AND THE  
APOSTLES TO THE COMING OF THE LORD.

## Explanation of Part II.

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# THE ALTO OF THE HISTORY OF OUR PRESENT PERIOD.

(FROM REV. VII TO THE END OF REV. XI.)

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### First Division of our Period.

The Times in which the Adversary sows his Seed,

SPECIFIED BY

THE TIMES OF THE APOSTLES AND THE SEVEN  
CHURCHES OF ASIA.

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REV. VII, 1: "After this I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth." (This whole chapter vii is an introduction to the historical contents of the Alto.)

These angels stand in the service of God. The four corners represent the earth in its common division into four parts—East, West, South, and North. The service of these angels was to hold the wind: "That no wind should blow on the earth, or on the sea, or upon any tree." Winds often bring destructive storms, and it appears from the context that a great destruction is in preparation here, implying divers judgments of God that shall be brought upon the earth by means of these winds. Earth, sea, and trees are very often used in their literal sense, but here it would be sufficient to consider them simply in their natural signification. They signify what they are represented as meaning in other places—viz., the sea as the element out of which the beast arises, and

therefore signifying the beastly nature. As water is easily moved by the slightest touch, so is it also a figure of an unstable, passionate, and lawless state of mind. Jacob, censuring his son Reuben, says: "Unstable as water, thou shalt not excel."<sup>1</sup> Jude calls such beastly men "wild waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame."<sup>2</sup> Isaiah says: "They are like the troubled sea, when it can not rest."<sup>3</sup>

Opposed to this unstable element, the earth, is a solid body, representing a different class of men; hence it represents such as have a certain solidity, who are standing on certain principles, and are therefore not so easily moved. Out of this element arises the second beast, or the false prophet, and his party—*i. e.*, they are holding fast certain moral and even religious principles. Mark it well; we do not say that all these principles are pure and genuine, for we have plainly seen before how the impure and false are an outgrowth of the seed of the devil. Yet in spite of this there is with them a certain solidity, a certain foundation on which they stand, and consequently there is power of resistance. Every religion has principles—solid points—on which it is based. The earth, as a figure, may thus include even some believers, though erring ones. Let it then be remarked here that wherever the earth appears in opposition to the sea, it signifies especially the element and sphere of the false prophet, as the sea signifies the element and the nature of the beast.

The trees are plants either purposely planted and taken care of, or are the natural product of the soil. They signify single persons,<sup>4</sup> as well as whole nations,<sup>5</sup> and even kingdoms,<sup>6</sup> and thus always signify men.

VERSES 2, 3: "And I saw another angel ascend from the sunrising, having the seal of the living God: and he cried

<sup>1</sup> Gen. xlix, 4.    <sup>2</sup> Jude 13.    <sup>3</sup> Isa. lvii, 20.    <sup>4</sup> Matt. iii, 10.    <sup>5</sup> Luke xiii, 6-9; Rom. xi, 17-24.    <sup>6</sup> Ez. xxxi, 3-18.



with a great voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we shall have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads."

Here is clearly indicated whom the coming judgments of God shall hurt—viz., the earth, the element of the false prophet, and the sea, the element of the beast and worldly men; but also the trees, single persons, nations and kingdoms especially planted by God or otherwise coming into existence. A certain number called "servants of God," who faithfully serve him, he will keep from harm; hence before these are sealed, the judgments of God are not allowed to begin. God causes his seal to be set on their foreheads, that these four destroying angels may know them and not hurt them. This sealing is performed by an angel, yet he is not alone, but only the first of many, as it is said: "Till we shall have sealed," etc. This angel ascended from the sunrise. Christ is the sun of his people and of his kingdom. From him comes all the light and salvation. From him comes also this wonderful deliverance and the keeping of his servants from these coming great judgments. This sealing reminds us of the Israelites who kept off the angel of death by marking the upper part of their door-post with the blood of the paschal lamb.

VERSES 4-8: "And I heard the number of them which were sealed, a hundred and forty and four thousand, out of every tribe of the children of Israel. Of the tribe of Juda were sealed twelve thousand; of the tribe of Reuben twelve thousand; of the tribe of Gad twelve thousand; of the tribe of Asher twelve thousand; of the tribe of Naphtali twelve thousand; of the tribe of Manasseh twelve thousand; of the tribe of Simeon twelve thousand; of the tribe of Levi twelve thousand; of the tribe of Issachar twelve thousand; of the tribe of Zebulun twelve thousand; of the tribe of Joseph twelve thousand; of the tribe of Benjamin were sealed twelve thousand."

These one hundred and forty and four thousand are an evidence of Israel's preference before other nations even in the present dispensation; illustrating what Paul said: "To the Jew first, and also to the Greek;" and "What advantage, then, hath the Jew? or what is the profit of circumcision? Much every way," etc.<sup>1</sup> Israel is not entirely cast off or forgotten by God. No. The people of whom Christ came according to the flesh is still under the special guidance of God, and destined even in the present dispensation to furnish a select number which assumes among the redeemed a pre-eminent position.

THE OMISSION OF THE TRIBE OF DAN.—Though it is stated "out of every tribe of the children of Israel," yet it will be observed that the tribe of Dan is not mentioned, and thus is here not reckoned with the twelve tribes of Israel. That this is done intentionally, there can be no doubt. The reason of this omission may be explained from the conduct of this tribe, and God's threat.<sup>2</sup> The covenant which God here made with Israel reads thus: "Lest there should be among you man, or woman, or family, or tribe, whose heart turneth away this day from the Lord our God, to go and serve the gods of these nations. . . . The Lord will not spare him, but then the anger of the Lord and his jealousy shall smoke against that man, and all the curses that are written in this book shall lie upon him, and the Lord shall blot out his name from under heaven. And the Lord shall separate him unto evil out of all the tribes of Israel." Dan was the first tribe that broke this covenant;<sup>3</sup> and on account of this transgression it is only just that his name appears blotted out, so that among the select number of faithful servants of God, to which every other tribe furnishes its share, Dan has no representative. This, however, does not mean to say that none shall be saved out

<sup>1</sup> Rom. i, 16; iii, 1-3.    <sup>2</sup> Deut. xxix, 18, 21.    <sup>3</sup> Judg. xviii, 1-31.

of the tribe of Dan. There may be some saved, as well as from other nations and tribes, as the words following show.

VERSES 9, 10: "After these things I saw, and behold, a great multitude, which no man could number, out of every nation, and of all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, arrayed in white robes, and palms in their hands; and they cry with a great voice, saying, Salvation unto our God which sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb."

Besides the hundred and forty and four thousand saved who are exclusively Israelites and a sealed number, there is shown to us an innumerable multitude of saved ones gathered from the whole human race according to its four divisions of nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues. This innumerable multitude comprises most probably all the saved from the beginning of the world to the next coming of the Lord. Understand it aright: not in their condition immediately after death, but *after* their resurrection by the coming of the Lord, when they receive their full glory. The believers go immediately after death into paradise, and wait there for their resurrection and full glory which the Lord will give them as a reward at his coming.<sup>1</sup>

VERSES 11, 12: "And all the angels were standing round about the throne, and about the elders and the four living creatures; and they fell before the throne on their faces, and worshiped God, saying, Amen: The blessing, and the glory, and the wisdom, and the thanksgiving, and the honor, and the power, and the might, be unto our God forever and ever. Amen." (A sevenfold praise.)

REMARK.—In proceeding further in the Revelation its representations increase. In the fourth chapter, where the throne of God appears for the first time, we see in connection with it only the four and twenty thrones with

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<sup>1</sup> See note 12.

the elders, the seven lamps, the glassy sea, and the four living creatures. In the fifth chapter appear in addition to this the Lamb and the ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands of angels. In this seventh chapter are further added the hundred and forty and four thousand sealed with the seal of God, and the innumerable multitude of the saved out of the whole human race divided into four divisions. This representation in this seventh chapter finds a parallel in Heb. xii, 22, though in a somewhat different order.

VERSES 13, 14: "And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, These arrayed in white robes, who are they, and whence came they? And I said unto him, My lord, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which come out of great tribulation, and they washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

In the ninth verse it was stated whence they came according to the flesh; but the Lord will here inform John whence they came according to the Spirit to be such glorious beings as they appear. Here they come out of great tribulation. Many, though not all, were by great tribulations brought to a knowledge of Christ, the Lamb, but all have, after they knew Christ, been led through great tribulations. These were the means by which the Lord could wake them up to see the dangers before them, and to keep them back from evil ways into which they would have fallen. Nay, some that were already going astray were by tribulations brought back into the right way. Tribulations were necessary to make them partakers of the righteousness of Christ, as well as of his sanctification. A piece of linen may be washed perfectly clean, and yet not be white—*i. e.*, bleached. So may any one through faith in Christ be perfectly justified, but he is not on that account also sanctified in the same degree justification is perfect as soon as one believes in Christ; but sanctification, which begins in justi-

fication, is capable of growth, and the believer is called upon to make efforts for the perfecting of it.<sup>1</sup> While then these hundred and forty and four thousand seem in certain respects exempt from this tribulation, the innumerable multitude, those who are fully affected by it, attain thereby to greater glory.

VERSES 15-17: "Therefore are they before the throne of God; and they serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall spread his tabernacle over them.<sup>2</sup> They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun strike upon them, nor any heat: for the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall be their shepherd, and shall guide them unto fountains of waters of life: and God shall wipe away every tear from their eyes."

This is a description of the felicity of the innumerable multitude in heaven. Their near position to God—before his throne; their service—in his temple (as priests); and the fullness of his glory and love which he extends to them, leave no room to doubt that this multitude is the Church of God formed during the three periods of the promise of the law and of the Gospel. Being, in a way, first fruits,<sup>3</sup> and partakers of the first resurrection, they are, therefore, also called the "Church of the first born."<sup>4</sup> Unquestionably it makes a great difference whether one lives and serves God in times of the greatest temptations, adversities, and tribulations, like the believers of the *first three* periods, or whether one serves God during the fourth period on earth, where Satan and his host shall be bound, and everywhere rest, peace, and blessing will prevail. This difference is also indicated by the Scriptures in expressions like "first born, priest," etc., to distinguish them from those who come after the first born, and who are also God's people, but not priests.

Consider well how these two verses allude to the trib-

<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. vii, 1; Heb. xii, 14.  
i, 18. <sup>4</sup> Heb. xii, 23.

<sup>2</sup> See note 13.

<sup>3</sup> James

ulation past: "hunger, thirst, nor any heat," hence, neither that heat nor fiery trial of temptation and persecution<sup>1</sup> shall fall on them again. Jesus, the Lamb of God, shall guide them to the fountains of waters of life. What a reward for faithful enduring in the Lord! How benign and comforting that God himself shall wipe every tear from their eyes! This is God's disposition towards his children, not only after the tribulation is past, but even while they are suffering. This we ought not to forget: sufferings laid upon us by the Lord bring unspeakable glory.

THE PURPOSE OF THIS CHAPTER.—We see from these verses and from this whole chapter that its contents have a similar purpose with the fourteenth chapter of the Revelation, which we have considered in the Treble. It serves as an example of encouragement for the followers of Christ to endure to the end in the impending tribulation. More than this, it is evidently a divine assurance set up beforehand, that when the divine judgments shall break forth, and seemingly affect the believer as well as the wicked, yet every thing is graciously and wisely ordered by God. God's cause is safe. His people are safe. Here is fulfilled what the prophet says: "Fear not, for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee," etc.<sup>2</sup> Now, just because of this, this chapter is to the believer all the more an encouragement to endure. Thus, then, while the fourteenth chapter represents the last and most severe part of the tribulations of the great conflict, this seventh chapter represents the beginning of the tribulations or the judgments of God signified by the Revelation.

<sup>1</sup> 1 Peter iv, 12.    <sup>2</sup> Isa. xliii, 1-7; Psa. cv, 15.

The hundred and forty and four thousand and the people of God appear in both chapters; but at entirely opposite points of time, and also in different circumstances. Here is the sealing for the safe keeping of the hundred and forty and four thousand before the beginning of the great tribulation; there is their happy and victorious arrival at the end of that tribulation. Here is God's people out of all nations and tribes, etc., standing before the throne and before the Lamb, arrayed in white robes, with palms in their hands, etc.; there it is as dried grain harvested and gathered into the heavenly barn. With such a representation this chapter is a glorious introduction to the history itself, which now follows:

#### OPENING OF THE SEVENTH SEAL.

REV. VIII, 1: "And when he opened the seventh seal, there followed a silence in heaven about the space of half an hour."

This refers us to the opening of the seals in the sixth chapter. It was to be expected that the opening of the seventh seal should immediately follow the sixth, but this was not the case; for the Revelation makes a perceptible interval between these two seals, and fills it up with the necessary representations of the seventh chapter. This shows that seven, according to the numeral order, belongs to the preceding six, yet it is as the fulfillment of the six, in its nature something else, something new, and, therefore, assuming a position separate from the six.

A SILENCE IN HEAVEN.—It must appear strange to the reader, that while every other seal brought immediately important historical representations before our view, this seventh, which is the fulfillment of the six, and, therefore, a very important seal, comes, so to say, empty before us. There follows a mysterious silence of half an hour in heaven. Nothing happens during this

interval, *i. e.*, there are no events prefigured here. Now, can this be, that in this most important seal, which is the beginning of a new development, there be nothing but a stepping in of an entirely empty and insignificant interval? It would be hard to accept this. It would be incompatible with the divine activity, and also with the character of the Revelation itself, which has no empty space, but is written inside and outside. This silence of half an hour rather points to the opening of this seventh seal itself: that here space is given or room made for something answering the character of this seventh seal, and which comes in and fills the time specified. What can this be which is here coming in? What else except that which according to the order of time and of history belongs here, *viz.*, the times of the apostles and the seven Churches of Asia? This it is that answers to the character of this seventh seal.

WHAT SEVEN, AS THE FULFILLMENT OF SIX, SIGNIFIES HERE.—What is the fulfillment of general representation other than specific representation? This seventh seal, then, as the fulfilling of the six, which represent the history of our period in general, is, as such, fulfilling the representation of specific history, hence, here begins the specification of history. A division of specific history, *i. e.*, the first, which contains the times of the apostles and the seven Churches of Asia, belongs here according to the time and its character. This division answers perfectly the silence of our text. Every thing which happens during this division is neither seen nor heard, because this first rider does it secretly. It happens in silence; it is silent history.

THE HALF HOUR also signifies, in regard to time, a part (incompleteness), only half of the whole. This is the true character of this First Division, or the times of the apostles and the seven Churches of Asia. This division appears, compared with the history of the other



divisions following, only half historical ; for the times of the apostles and the seven Churches have merely introductory signification to the Revelation proper, to the book which God is giving to the Lamb. They precede this book and lead to and into it. Again, the book which God gave to Christ contains things which must shortly come to pass. Thus they are a history of the future, while the times of the apostles were then already history of the past, and the seven Churches of Asia<sup>1</sup> history of the then present, *i. e.*, a description of the conditions as they existed in the times of John. Hence, they were only in part or half that which the other divisions, beginning with the eighth chapter, represent. Let us then introduce and consider that history which, according to the order of time and the order of the Revelation, belongs here.

## I. THE TIMES OF THE APOSTLES.

The first proofs that the adversary has been active in scattering secretly his evil seed in the field of the Lord, we find where Paul says to the elders of the Church at Ephesus: <sup>1</sup> “And from among your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them.” This was then only a prophecy, but its fulfillment was not far off. The evil seed was hence already sown among the wheat, and its future appearance foretold. In writing to the Christians at Rome, however, the apostle speaks of things which then really existed, when he says: <sup>2</sup> “Now, I beseech you, brethren, mark them which are causing the divisions and occasions of stumbling, contrary to the doctrine which ye learned, and turn away from them.” Again, when he exhorts the Corinthians on account of “divisions and factions among them.”<sup>3</sup> In his second epistle to them he speaks of well

<sup>1</sup> Acts xx, 30.  
xi, 18, 19.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. xvi, 17.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. i, 10-12;

known facts, when he says: "For we are not as the many, corrupting the word of God; but as of sincerity, but as of God, speak we in Christ;"<sup>1</sup> and, "For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, fashioning themselves into apostles of Christ. And no wonder; for even Satan fashioneth himself into an angel of light. It is no great thing, therefore, if his ministers also fashion themselves as ministers of righteousness."

Paul's entire epistle to the Galatians is directed against such as at that time had almost ruined the Churches of Galatia by sowing hypocritical and evil seed among them. Under the pretext of zeal and high esteem for God's holy commandments—circumcision and the law—they undermined the foundations and truths of Christianity.

The apostle gives the Ephesians to understand that "to attain unto the unity of faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a full grown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ," is the means by which to stand fast against every wind of doctrine brought about by the sleight of men and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive.<sup>2</sup>

The Philippians he warns of the same class of men which disturbed the Galatians, calling them dogs, evil workers, and the concision.<sup>3</sup>

A similar warning he gives also to the Colossians, to Timothy, and to Titus.<sup>4</sup>

Peter testifies of similar evil, when he says: "But there arose false prophets also among the people, as among you also there shall be false teachers, who shall privily bring in destructive heresies," etc.<sup>5</sup>

John agrees with these, when he says: "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but prove the spirits, whether they

<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. ii, 17; xi, 13-15.    <sup>2</sup> Eph. iv, 13, 14.    <sup>3</sup> Phil. iii, 2.    <sup>4</sup> Col. ii, 16-23; 1 Tim. i, 3; 2 Tim. i, 13; Tit. i, 10-16.    <sup>5</sup> 2 Pet. ii, 1-3.

are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.”<sup>1</sup> John saw what the purpose which these secret agitators of evil were pursuing was, viz., opposition to Christ. All these are clear specifications of the first activity of the adversary in this First Division of our Period. They refer chiefly to the introduction of false doctrines, and just in the manner in which the first rider represents this introduction.

## II. THE SEVEN CHURCHES OF ASIA.

These lead us to Rev. i, 4-20, which is the introduction to the real historical matter of the seven Churches.

Verse 4 begins thus: “John to the seven Churches which are in Asia.” Here we have,

1. THE LOCALITY OF THESE CHURCHES.—Asia, in this passage and in many others of the New Testament, designates not “the continent of Asia,” nor what we commonly call “Asia Minor,” but a Roman province which embraced the western part of the peninsula of Asia Minor, and of which Ephesus was the capital.<sup>2</sup> Now, why should this Revelation of God be given first to the Churches lying so far away in a north-western direction from Jerusalem? Because, Jerusalem, chosen by God, to make his name known there, being destroyed, the Jews from that time scattered, and the woman fled into the wilderness. Hence, the light of revelation had to move, and did so in a north-westerly direction, to the utmost borders of Asia, opposite Europe, to illumine that part of the world. That Jesus here appears to John in Patmos, still farther west from the continent of Asia, in the *Ægean* Sea, shows that the true light, Christ himself, was already farther ahead; and signifies the course which this light of God and Christ should take. The choice of this locality for a special revelation

<sup>1</sup> 1 John iv, 1-3; 2 John, vii.  
Dict., Asia.

<sup>2</sup> W. Smith's Bible

here through the glorified Son of God from heaven is full of signification for the course which the Church of God was to take from that time.

2. THE SALUTATION TO THESE CHURCHES.—This comprises the remaining part from

VERSES 4-6: "Grace be to you, and peace from him which is and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven spirits which are before his throne."

Here appears the close connection of these spirits with God. "From him which is and which was," points to the name of God, as God called himself when he appeared to Moses to send him into Egypt; but here is the addition: "and which is to come," proclaiming his future coming for the glorification of Christ on the great day of God the Almighty. "And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the first born of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loveth us and loosed us from our sins by his blood, and made us a kingdom, priests unto his God and Father; to him be the glory and the dominion for ever and ever, Amen."

3. ANNOUNCING TO THE CHURCHES THE KEY-NOTE OF THE REVELATION.

VERSE 7: "Behold, he cometh with the clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they which pierced him; and all the tribes of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen."

The coming of the Lord is the key-note of the Revelation; hence, not only appearing as the last note in the base, and at the end of all the four parts of the Revelation, but also at the beginning, in the introduction thereto.

4. GOD'S POSITION TO THE CHURCHES.

VERSE 8: "I am the Alpha and the Omega, saith the Lord God, which is and which was and which is to come, the Almighty."

## 5. JOHN'S RELATION TO THE CHURCHES.

VERSES 9-11: "I, John, your brother and partaker with you in the tribulation and kingdom and patience in Jesus, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day [to be well discerned from the day of his coming, as the margin uses here a different term] and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet saying, What thou seest, write in a book, and send it to the seven Churches; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamum, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea."

Here we see 6. THE CHOICE OF THESE CHURCHES.—Why just these, and seven of them? Because each of them, in its peculiar characteristic, suited the purpose for which God would use them, viz., to make of them, according to the divine law of action, a whole, which should faithfully represent the general condition of the entire Church of God at that time.

## 7. THE DIVINE DESTINY OF THESE CHURCHES.

VERSE 12: "And I turned to see the voice which spake with me. And having turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks (or lamp-stands)."

What these signify is stated in verse 20: "The seven candlesticks are seven Churches." The destiny of the Churches is to give light. As the candlestick with its seven arms and seven lamps, standing in the tabernacle, was a figure of the Light of God, and as there were in the temple of Solomon ten single golden candlesticks (representing the period and the light of the law) so are the Churches of God in our period not only a figurative light, but the real light of God through Christ in the world, as he says: "Ye are the light of the world." Seven is a plurality, but also a unity, and represents the unity of the light of God in the plurality of the Churches scattered all over the earth. The essence of the seven Spirits of God is manifest in the Church of God.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rev. i, 4; iv, 5; v, 6.

## 8. THE POSITION OF JESUS TO THE CHURCHES.

VERSES 13-20: "And in the midst of the candlesticks (or lamp-stands) one like unto a son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the breasts with a golden girdle. And his head and his hair were white as white wool, as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire; and his feet like unto burnished brass, as if it had been refined in a furnace; and his voice as the voice of many waters. And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth proceeded a sharp two-edged sword: and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength. And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as one dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying, Fear not; I am the first and the last, and the Living one; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore, and have the keys of death and Hades. Write therefore the things which thou sawest, and the things which are, and the things which shall come to pass hereafter; the mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are angels of the seven Churches: and the seven candlesticks are seven Churches."

Here Jesus appears glorified among these Churches. His garment is that of angels.<sup>1</sup> His head and his hair correspond with the nature of the light of his glorified being. His eyes show an all-penetrating power of vision, before which nothing can be hid. His feet manifest the irresistible strength by which he shall be able to tread under and subdue all his enemies. His voice, too, is mighty and full of majesty.<sup>2</sup> The seven stars in his right hand designate his position to the Churches by means of angels: and that, connected with it, the sharp and two-edged sword, proceeding out of his mouth, and his countenance as the sun shining in his strength is mentioned, signifies that the Churches may apply it to themselves, that is, the word of his mouth,<sup>3</sup> and the light of his countenance—two very important things. If

<sup>1</sup> Rev. xv, 6; Dan. x, 5.  
iv, 12, 13.

<sup>2</sup> Psa. xxix, 4.

<sup>3</sup> Heb.

Jesus had appeared to John in the form in which he manifested himself directly after his resurrection, John would not have fallen as dead at his feet; but such glory and power in which Jesus here appeared, was more than John could bear.

The purpose for which Jesus thus appears among the Churches is obvious: He is the Shepherd and Bishop of their souls, and exerciseth here this office. He watches over them, considers all their deeds and ways, and corrects them. He desires to keep them in the right path.

9. THE ANGELS OF THE CHURCHES.—What are the seven stars in the right hand of the Lord? The Lord himself calls this figure a mystery, but explains it immediately, saying: "The seven stars are angels of the seven Churches." This explanation ought to be sufficient and final to every disciple of Christ, for there is no higher authority than he. If the stars do not signify angels, then do also the candlesticks (or lamp-stands) not signify Churches. Then can it also be maintained that waters do not signify peoples, and multitudes, and nations;<sup>1</sup> the field does not signify the world, etc.,<sup>2</sup> and the Lord's explanations are no explanations at all.

Yet, if in the face of all this, some one should not be able to understand this subject, let him consider some such testimony of Scripture concerning the office of angels as the following: "Are they (the angels) not all ministering spirits, sent forth to do service for the sake of them that shall inherit salvation?"<sup>3</sup> See how they are appointed by the Lord to minister to the little ones.<sup>4</sup> Nay, they are not only with us during life, but also when we die, for then they carry us into Abraham's bosom.<sup>5</sup> Also for organizations, as for instance single nations, God has appointed such invisible ministers.<sup>6</sup> Angels

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<sup>1</sup> Rev. xvii, 15.    <sup>2</sup> Matt. xiii, 38.    <sup>3</sup> Heb. i, 4.    <sup>4</sup> Matt. xviii, 10;    <sup>5</sup> Luke xvi, 22.    <sup>6</sup> Dan. x, 20, 21; Josh. v, 13, 14; Exod. xxiii, 20-23.

were thus engaged and active where we would never have thought it, if the testimony given us were not so certain.<sup>1</sup> Now, if a prince of angels is set over the whole people of God, if there are angels for single believers, why not for a number of such believers, who are, according to God's own precept, united as Churches and called by God to work in that capacity? It is the will of God that they exist as such, and that they be a blessing on earth. Will he also be willing and ready to assist them in that direction? If, as we see from these passages, God's people had such invisible guides on their way to the earthly Canaan, why should God's people under the new covenant, and on their way to the heavenly Canaan, not be under similar guidance? Moreover, if these angels thus ministering to the Churches are standing under the supreme direction of Christ (and it can not be otherwise), could their relation to him and to the Churches be more fitly represented than it is in our text: Christ in the midst of the golden candlesticks, holding in his right hand these seven stars?

Another objection may here be made, namely: If in reality angels are meant, why does the Lord then speak to the angels instead of to the Churches. Considering the circumstances, this is, so to say, self-evident. If any one feels it his duty to communicate something to his intimate friend, which he would not deem proper to say to his face, he will choose such a way of presenting the matter as will least unpleasantly affect or injure his friend's feelings. For instance, when Jesus reminded Peter of his three fold denial,<sup>2</sup> and the prophet Nathan reminded David of his sin, introducing the matter by a parable, and then afterward telling him directly: "Thou art the man!" so does Christ assume before these seven Churches the position of an observer, reprover, and

<sup>1</sup> Acts vii, 53; Gal. iii, 19; Rev. i, 1; xxii, 16.

<sup>2</sup> John xxi, 18.



exhorter. He is speaking to his intimate and beloved friends, and treats them as tenderly as he once did his friend Peter. He is not directly praising or blaming them, but he addresses himself to the angel, speaks to him, yet makes it gradually appear clearer and plainer that he means not the angel, but the Churches. At first there seems no doubt that he means the angel, but by further reflection it is perceived that he must mean the Churches; and finally to free us from every doubt, and to make it perfectly clear, the Lord comes with his closing sentence in his address to each Church, declaring, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to *the Churches*."

That "the stars" can not mean the bishops or elders of the Churches is also evident from the fact that in each of the apostolic Churches there was a plurality of elders.<sup>1</sup> How can the Lord address a plurality of men as a single person and as an angel? The simple explanation of our Lord concerning the term "star" is then here and for all other instances in the Revelation the only correct explanation.

### THE CHURCHES SINGLY.

STAND-POINT OF OBSERVATION.—The character of this division, generally indicated through the first rider, shows us from which stand-point the seven Churches of Asia must chiefly be considered—viz., as God's work in conflict with evil, and properly with the continuation of the work of evil, which the devil began secretly,<sup>2</sup> and hence so far as it had in the times of John (towards the end of the first century of the Christian era) made progress in the Church of God. John states actual conditions as they existed at that time in these seven Churches; but as these were then, so to say, the representatives of the

<sup>1</sup> Acts xiv, 23; xx, 17; Phil. i, 1; Tit. i, 5-7.  
xiii, 24-30.

<sup>2</sup> Matt.

Church of God, they thus together represent the general condition of the Church of God of that time.

This condition shows us as well the progress of evil from the beginning since it was sowed, as also its relation to the future, whose progress from that time on future changes well indicate.

That which is presented for consideration in each of these Churches comes in pretty much the same order in all—viz.:

1. The special position of the Lord toward each Church.

2. The character of the Church described by the Lord: (*a*) the good; (*b*) the other.

3. The exhortation; and,

4. The promise.

By this order the contents may be more readily perceived.

REV. II, 1: "To the angel of the Church in Ephesus write."

Ephesus was an illustrious city in the district of Ionia, nearly opposite the island of Samos, and about the middle of the western coast of the peninsula commonly called Asia Minor. Of the Roman province of Asia, Ephesus was the capital.<sup>1</sup> Paul worked in this city about three years;<sup>2</sup> also Timothy,<sup>3</sup> Priscilla, and Aquila, Apollos and Tychicus;<sup>4</sup> and in later years the apostle John. The enjoyment of such advantages placed this Church in a very important position, and gave it great responsibility. Accordingly we see here:

#### 1. THE LORD'S POSITION TO THIS CHURCH,—

"These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right-hand, he that walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks."

The Lord's position to all the Churches together is

<sup>1</sup> W. Smith's Bible Dic.    <sup>2</sup> Acts xx, 31.    <sup>3</sup> 1 Tim. i, 3.  
<sup>4</sup> Acts xviii, 19-25; Eph. v, 21.

especially the position which he assumes toward the Church in Ephesus.

As he once walked in paradise, observing there the first men and appearing to them,<sup>1</sup> so does he seem to observe the men newly created in Christ at the beginning of their new career.

## 2. THE CHARACTER OF THIS CHURCH DESCRIBED BY THE LORD. (a) THE GOOD,—

VERSES 2, 3: "I know thy works, and thy toil and patience, and that thou canst not bear evil men, and didst try them which call themselves apostles, and they are not, and didst find them false; and thou hast patience and didst bear for my name's sake and hast not grown weary."

This is a very laudable testimony, but there now follows:

## (b) THE BLAME,—

VERSES 4, 5: "But I have against thee, that thou didst leave thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I come to thee, and will move thy candlestick out of its place, except thou repent."<sup>2</sup>

This leaving of the first love is not a small, but a very serious and dangerous evil: a falling from a glorious position. How greatly the Lord desires to bring them back again to their first state, through kindness, is seen by the fact that after this blame he brings to notice another good trait of theirs, saying:

VERSE 6: "But this thou hast, that thou hatest the works of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate."

What these works were is not precisely known; the general opinion is that it was lasciviousness.

## 3. THE EXHORTATION,—

VERSE 7: "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the Churches."

This means, first, any one capable of hearing in the

<sup>1</sup> Gen. iii, 8.    <sup>2</sup> See note 14.

Churches; but also outside of these every one capable of hearing this Word of the Lord.

#### 4. THE PROMISE,—

“To him that overcometh, to him will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.”

“To overcome” refers to every thing which is sin, and displeasing to God, especially for what he blames this Church. The promise is in accord with the position of the Lord to this Church—connected with paradise. “To eat of the tree of life” belongs to those heavenly things of which the apostle says: “Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard,” etc.<sup>1</sup>

REV. II, 8: “And to the angel of the Church in Smyrna write.”

Smyrna is still a large city to-day, situated about fifty miles north of Ephesus.

#### 1. THE LORD'S POSITION TO THIS CHURCH,—

“These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and lived [again].”

Jesus refers here to his pre-existence: being before all things, and in whom all things consist;<sup>2</sup> without whom not any thing was made that hath been made.<sup>3</sup> Yet who for the salvation of man went through the deepest sufferings and tribulations; died, but now lives glorified forever.

#### 2. THE CHARACTER OF THIS CHURCH,—

VERSE 9: “I know thy tribulation, and thy poverty (but thou art rich) and the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and they are not, but are a synagogue of Satan.”

All praise without any blame, they are therefore in this their condition and tribulation comforted by the Lord. He reveals to them what shall happen, and how long the troubles shall last, in order that they might

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. ii, 9.    <sup>2</sup> Col. i, 17.    <sup>3</sup> John i, 3.

prepare themselves to meet and suffer it fearlessly; for he would be with them:

VERSE 10: "Fear not the things which thou art about to suffer! Behold the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days. Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

### 3. THE EXHORTATION,—

VERSE 11: "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the Churches."

### 4. THE PROMISE,—

"He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death."

This promise agrees with the position of the Lord to this Church, as also in the main with her general character.

REV. II, 12: "And to the angel of the Church in Pergamum write."

This city, the capital of Hellespontic Mysia, was situated on the right bank of the river Caicus, nearly sixty-four miles to the north of Smyrna. Its ancient importance may be inferred from its possessing a library of two hundred thousand volumes, which Antony and Cleopatra transferred to Alexandria. It still, in its decline, retains some part of its importance, and under the name of Bergamo, contains a population of about fourteen thousand inhabitants.<sup>1</sup>

### 1. THE LORD'S POSITION TO THIS CHURCH,—

"These things saith he that hath the sharp two-edged sword."

The sword signifies, as we have seen, war and execution of judgment.

### 2. THE CHARACTER OF THIS CHURCH,—

VERSE 13: "I know where thou dwellest, even where

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<sup>1</sup> J. Kitto's Illustrated History of the Bible.

Satan's throne is: and thou holdest fast my name, and didst not deny my faith, even in the days of Antipas my witness, my faithful one, who was killed among you, where Satan dwelleth."

This is the good side. Now comes

#### THE BLAME,—

VERSES 14-16: "But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there some that hold the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to cast a stumbling-block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit fornication. So hast thou also some that hold the teaching of the Nicolaitans in like manner. Repent therefore; or else I come to thee quickly, and I will make war against them with the sword of my mouth."

#### 3. THE EXHORTATION,—

VERSE 17: "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the Churches."

#### 4. THE PROMISE,—

"To him that overcometh, to him will I give of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and upon the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth but he that receiveth it."

This promise contains something mysterious which will be fully known only in heaven. As the evil, which is yet in its course of formation in this Church, is compared to the sin of the congregation of Israel in the wilderness, it is not strange that the promise here refers to one of the greatest and most wonderful blessings which the Israelites enjoyed in the wilderness—namely, the manna, the bread of God from heaven. This bread is also the Word of God, and the Word of God is again called the sword of the Spirit. There is thus a connection between the promise and the position which the Lord assumes toward this Church. The hidden manna, however, is much superior to that of the Israelites, for it nourishes not only an earthly but a heavenly being, born

of God. That it is called *hidden* signifies that it is not manifest to all, but only to those who are worthy of it.

*The white stone, φηφον*, a little stone which was used at that time, and even by Paul himself, to give his vote in cases of decision,<sup>1</sup> may have here a similar signification, though more in the sense and use of the Urim and Thummim.<sup>2</sup> It is for the overcomer evidently a glorious honorary distinction and reward for rightly discerning and deciding false teachings. Close adherence to pure doctrines has a special and significant reward. The new name written on this stone will be a mystery to all except the one receiving it.

REV. II, 18: "And to the angel of the Church in Thyatira write."

Thyatira, a city on the Lycus, founded by Seleucus Nicator, lay to the left of the road from Pergamus to Sardis, on the very confines of Mysia and Ionia.<sup>3</sup>

### 1. THE LORD'S POSITION TO THIS CHURCH,—

"These things saith the Son of God, who hath his eyes like a flame of fire, and his feet are like unto burnished brass."

He, whom John formerly describes as "one like unto a son of man,"<sup>4</sup> announces himself to this Church as the Son of God. Compare his position with the character of the Church and with the promise.

### 2. THE CHARACTER OF THIS CHURCH,—

VERSE 19: "I know thy works, and thy love and faith and ministry and patience, and that thy last works are more than the first."

Much praise so far, but now comes

### 3. THE BLAME,—

VERSES 20-25: "But I have much<sup>5</sup> against thee, for thou sufferest the woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, and she teacheth and seduceth my servants to commit

<sup>1</sup> Acts xxvi, 10.  
Dic. <sup>4</sup> Rev. i, 13.

<sup>2</sup> Num. xxvii, 21.

<sup>5</sup> See note 15.

<sup>3</sup> W. Smith's Bible

fornication, and to eat things sacrificed to idols. And I gave her time that she should repent; and she willeth not to repent of her fornication. Behold, I do cast her into a bed and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their works. And I will kill her children with death; and all the Churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the veins and hearts: and I will give to each one of you according to your works. But to you I say, to the rest that are in Thyatira, as many as have not this teaching, which know not the deep things of Satan, as they say; I cast upon you no other burden. Howbeit that which ye have, hold fast till I come."

### 3. THE PROMISE,—

VERSES 26-28: "And he that overcometh, and he that keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give authority over the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron, as the vessels of the potter are broken to shivers; as I also have received of my Father: and I will give him the morning star."

This promise is in harmony with many divine declarations.<sup>1</sup> That the morning star shall be given to the believers after their resurrection and during their next, fourth period of the Church of God, may appear as a peculiar and new idea, but it is certainly not incompatible with our sitting in heavenly [places] and ruling over the earth, as the Scripture repeatedly testifies.

### 4. THE EXHORTATION,—

VERSE 29: "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the Churches."

REV. III, 1: "And to the angel of the Church in Sardis write."

Sardis, whose ruins now bear the modified name of *Sart*, is situated about sixty miles north-west of Ephesus, at the foot of Mount Tmolus, on the river Pactolus.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xix, 28; Luke xix, 15-19; xxii, 29, 30; Rev. v, 10; xx, 4-6. <sup>2</sup> J. Kitto's Illustrated History of the Bible.



## 1. THE LORD'S POSITION TO THIS CHURCH,—

"These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars."<sup>1</sup>

From him emanates life and divine efficacy.

## 2. THE CHARACTER OF THIS CHURCH,—

"I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and thou art dead."

VERSES 2, 3: "Be thou watchful and stablish the things that remain, which were ready to die: for I have found no works of thine fulfilled before my God. Remember therefore how thou hast received and didst hear; and keep it, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come as a thief and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee."

Thus here is "the blame" first, and then comes  
THE GOOD,—

VERSE 4: "But thou hast a few names in Sardis which did not defile their garments: and they shall walk with me in white; for they are worthy."

## 3. THE PROMISE,—

VERSE 5: "He that overcometh shall thus be arrayed in white garments; and I will in no wise blot his name out of the book of life, and I will confess his name before my Father and before his angels."

## 4. THE EXHORTATION,—

VERSE 6: "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the Churches."

REV. III, 7: "And to the angel of the Church in Philadelphia write."

This city (or town), now called *Allah Shehr*—i. e., city of God, is situated on the lower slopes of Tmolus, about twenty-five miles east of Sardis.

## 1. THE LORD'S POSITION TO THIS CHURCH,—

"These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he

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<sup>1</sup> Rev. iv, 5; v, 6.

that hath the key of David, he that opened, and none shall shut, and that shutteth, and none openeth."

## 2. THE CHARACTER OF THIS CHURCH,—

VERSE 8: "I know thy works (behold, I have given before thee a door opened which none can shut), that thou hast a little power, and didst keep my word, and didst not deny my name."

## NOW A WORD OF COMFORT,—

VERSES 9-11: "Behold, I give of the synagogue of Satan, of them which say they are Jews, and they are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee. Because thou didst keep the word of my patience,<sup>1</sup> I also will keep thee from the hour of trial, that [hour] which is to come upon the whole world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. I come quickly: hold fast that which thou hast, that no one take thy crown."

## 3. THE PROMISE,—

VERSE 12: "He that overcometh, I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go out thence no more: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God, and my own new name."

In such a manner shall those be rewarded who, though having but little power, still are faithful and endure to the end. They shall receive great dignity, and a glorious, immovable position. Instead of evil names, which men tried to fasten on them, God will so glorify them that the highest and noblest names shall shine forth out of their character, proving that they are of God, and citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem, partakers of the new nature of Christ.

## 4. THE EXHORTATION,—

VERSE 13: "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the Churches."

<sup>1</sup> Or, *steadfastness*.

REV. III, 14: "And to the angel of the Church in Laodicea write."

Laodicea was situated in the valley of the Mæander, on a small river called the Lycus, with Colosse and Hierapolis a few miles distant to the west. It is now a scene of utter desolation.<sup>1</sup>

### 1. THE LORD'S POSITION TO THIS CHURCH,—

"These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God."

Amen signifies: in truth, verily, most certainly, so be it. Where we read in the translations of the New Testament that Jesus said, "Verily, verily," it reads in the Greek, "Amen, amen."<sup>2</sup>

### 2. THE CHARACTER OF THIS CHURCH,—

VERSES 15-17: "I know thy works that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and have gotten riches, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art the wretched one and miserable and poor and blind and naked."

To this the Lord adds:

#### AN INSTRUCTION,—

VERSES 18-20: "I counsel thee to buy of me gold refined by fire, that thou mayest become rich; and white garments, that thou mayest clothe thyself, and that the shame of thy nakedness be not made manifest; and eye-salve to anoint thine eyes, that thou mayest see. As many as I love, I reprove and chasten: be zealous therefore and repent. Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me."

### 3. THE PROMISE,—

VERSE 21: "He that overcometh, I will give to him to sit down with me in my throne, as I also overcame and sat down with my Father in his throne."

<sup>1</sup> W. Smith's Bible Dic.      <sup>2</sup> See note 16.

To him that stands in the lowest position—like the Church in Laodicea—the Lord promises as a reward the highest position which a creature may possibly attain: to sit with Christ on his throne, but this only under the condition that he proves himself a conquerer.

#### 4. THE EXHORTATION,—

VERSE 22: “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the Churches.”

#### THE MOST ESSENTIAL POINTS IN THESE CHURCHES.

In regard to the various materials which invite us to further explanations of its rich contents, we are compelled to confine our remarks chiefly to that which serves to specify the history of *this First Division of our Period*; and this lies especially in the character of these Churches.

THEIR GOOD SIDE.—In this respect they stand before us in a glorious and blessed condition. They are candlesticks of the costliest metal. Their sevenfold light of God beams forth into the world. In their midst is the Lord in his glorified human form, with eyes piercing through every thing, with feet to tread down every enemy, with a mighty voice, and holding in his right-hand the angels which he appointed to be invisible ministers to his Churches. He appears also at the same time in a terrible judicial position: with a sharp two-edged sword proceeding out of his mouth, and his countenance shining as the sun in his strength.<sup>1</sup>

Besides this, it is testified of the Churches that activity in the Lord is exercised by them: works, toil, and patient endurance. There is determinate opposition to evil men, a trying and rejecting of false apostles, and a continuance of unwearied labor for the Lord's sake.<sup>2</sup> Neither tribulation nor poverty is able to weaken their noble characters; nor can danger or death injure their faith in the Lord, or deter them from the confession of his truth.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rev. i, 13.    <sup>2</sup> Rev. ii, 1-3.    <sup>3</sup> Rev. ii, 13.

There are love, service, faith, and steadfastness—yea, even progress in all these things, so that the last works are more than the first.<sup>1</sup> For this reason has the Lord given to his Church an open door, which none shall shut. Even with little power she stands victorious against her enemies and shames them, so that these are constrained to acknowledge humbly that the love of God is manifest in the Church. Therefore the Lord gives her the promise to keep her from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world.

THE OTHER SIDE OF HER CHARACTER.—We see in Ephesus how the enemy is not only making a superficial attack on the Church, but hits the foundation of her being and life by effecting a leaving of her first love, which God poured into the heart of his children as the beginning of the new life, and which ought to have grown stronger. This is therefore no small success which the enemy achieved in his first attack, but is a fundamental evil in her character, an evil germinating in her most inward being, very dangerous, so that if a return to the first state is not effected soon, it will produce sad consequences, as the Lord declares: “The candlestick will be moved out of its place.” Thus, as we saw that the Lord was present and active in these Churches, so also the devil is not far from them, nor inactive.

Ephesus is a proof; for though he is not personally named, his secret work testifies of him; but we see him

2. In Smyrna, openly engaged in violent action, as stated by the Lord: “Behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried, and ye shall have tribulation ten days. Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life!” Yet the evil begun in Ephesus is not further advanced; for Smyrna is without blame, and the devil can there only cause external tribulation.

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<sup>1</sup> Rev. ii, 19.

3. In Pergamum, however, this adversary appears again, on the one hand, more vigorous in his position against the Churches, and, on the other hand, as furthering the evil begun, according to the word of the Lord to this Church: "I know where thou dwellest, even where Satan's throne is." Here is the very opposite of the position which the Lord assumes by his presence among these Churches. Here also Satan, within the reach of these Churches, has erected his throne. Neither was he without success, though this latter was not such as many may suppose, viz., that to eat things sacrificed to idols and to commit fornication were a matter of fact in this Church. For if this had been the case, the Lord's declaration to them, "I have a few things against thee," would hardly have been fully appropriate. This expression, therefore, and the course of development of evil seem rather to indicate, as also the text says, that they only held this doctrine of Balaam, without as yet having put it into practice. On the ground of the liberty which we have in Christ, it was easy to become convinced that a Christian might eat things sacrificed to idols without injury to his conscience,<sup>1</sup> and by polygamy, allowed in the Old Testament, could also be easily justified what the New Testament declares as fornication. It ought to be remembered that a certain amount of lasciviousness was among many heathen nations not at all considered as sin, and, hence, people grown up under such influences were the easier inclined to judge its true nature more leniently.

Perverse notions and doctrines often take root in the human heart and remain for a long time. That they are not always immediately put into practice is, because men would be ashamed of offending public decency by such an act, as, according to their inner convictions, they might feel perfectly free to commit. Similar reasons may also

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<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. x, 27-29.

have prevented those of the Church in Pergamum from committing these sins, though the latter had already begun. Hence, these persons were in a very perilous condition. If they did not repent, if no radical change of mind took place in them, the inevitable consequence declared by the Lord would soon follow. The "holding" of the teaching of Balaam, also the "holding" of the teaching of the Nicolaitans by certain members of this Church, is to be considered not so much putting it in practice as holding it in their opinion as not opposed to Christian doctrine.

4. In Thyatira the evil appears in a still more vigorous form. Here are false teachings, fornication, and eating things sacrificed to idols, not only privately held and theoretically admitted, but overtly taught and practiced. In these things is the woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, the chief leader; and this corruption is by its own perpetrators well known in its true nature, and called the deep things of Satan. Hence, the Lord testifies: "I have much against thee."

5. In Sardis the evil assumes a more developed form, so that this Church, though having the name of living, is yet declared to be dead.

6. In Philadelphia there comes again a blameless Church, and,

7. In Laodicea we have the fulfillment of the preceding six; neither cold nor hot—lukewarm, wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked—on the point of being thrown away. This is the representation of evil in the seven Churches in their order, in which a certain course of development will be noticed like the course of a work from its beginning to its completion.

This development as a seven is in itself irregular, appearing even from the position of the exhortations and promises, first, a three, and then a four, but also irregular, because the evil which affects the character of the

Churches does not follow the regular order through all the seven; for there comes right after the introduction of evil in the Church in Ephesus a good and blameless Church, Smyrna, as a hinderance to the progress of evil. Again, just before the last Church, Laodicea, there comes a good and blameless Church for the same purpose, and as a proof that the Lord is the Alpha and Omega, and will not permit evil to have its own will and regular course. If, then, it is making progress, beginning with Ephesus and ending with Laodicea, yet its progress is hindered and partial; it has out of seven stages only five in which to manifest itself.

However, it is not to be regarded that this evil, manifesting itself in five stages, constitutes five consecutive divisions of time. These five stages constitute, indeed, a whole, but evidently a whole in which all these single elements are at the same time extant. The Lord shows us here how far the evil seed, sown in the times of the apostles, has progressed, and what kind of elements were already existing, out of which the further development would proceed.<sup>1</sup>

#### PROPORTION OF THE GOOD ELEMENTS COMPARED WITH THE EVIL ONES.

*The good ones.*—Here are first the two entirely good and blameless Churches of Smyrna and Philadelphia. Then there are further the three Churches, Ephesus, Pergamum, and Thyatira, in which, besides the evil mentioned, the good and praiseworthy is still predominant. Then, finally, even Sardis, in which there is besides the predominating evil some decided good existing: “A few names which did not defile their garments.” These make together six Churches, in which there are good elements, and in five of them the good predominates.

*The evil ones.*—These possess, in opposition to the good

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<sup>1</sup> See note 17.



just named, but one Church in which there is no good at all, viz., Laodicea. The evil elements possess, besides this Church, only one in which the evil is predominant, viz., Sardis, and only three other Churches in which evil is found in considerable minority, viz., Ephesus, Pergamum, and Thyatira. Thus the good elements possess not only the majority of the Churches, but outweigh by far the evil elements in their quantity.

BRIEFLY STATED THE EVIL ELEMENTS ARE  
AS FOLLOWS:

1. *Leaving of the First Love*.—A successful attack on a most essential characteristic of the Church of God. (Ephesus.)

2. *False Prophetic Activity*.—Its teachings theoretically held. (Pergamum.)

3. *False Prophetic Activity*.—Its teachings practiced. (Thyatira.)

4. *Dead Christianity*.—Having merely the name of living, but being, with the exception of a few persons, really dead. (Sardis.)

5. *Neither Cold nor Hot*.—Without exception such a condition of complete spiritual decline, of wretchedness, blindness, and nakedness, that the Lord threatens it with rejection. (Laodicea.)

This is a representation of the evil as it was existing in that time in the seven Churches of Asia, and it is the specification of their history at that time. All these are not events of a striking external character, or of a noisy manifestation, but are rather happening secretly and quietly, and are thus silent history. Who does not see in them all the elements and the activity of the false prophet, which we have described in the Treble, and as whose faithful agent the first rider, the hero of this First Division of our Period, is proving himself?

## THE ALTO.

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### *Second Division of our Period.*

### The Times of Strife and Bloodshed,

SPECIFIED BY

THE FIRST THREE TRUMPETS.

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REV. VIII, 2: "And I saw the seven angels which stand before God; and there were given unto them seven trumpets."

After a silence in heaven of about half an hour and the insertion of corresponding history—the First Division of our Period—comes now the Second Division of our Period, with what may be called "complete history," compared with that of the first division, and which is in its regular order of time, introduced to us by seven angels with trumpets. These angels are described as "standing before God." That which comes to pass here comes from God, yet only in so far as he makes evil serve his purpose. Trumpets were already an institution of the Lord in Israel, to give by their various sounds indications and orders for the diverse movements of the people, for the calling together of the assembly, for the journeying of the camps, for sounding the alarm of war, and for celebrating the sacrifices on festivals and new moons.

VERSES 3, 4: "And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should add it unto the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints went up before God out of the angel's hand."

Prior to the sounding of these trumpets, there is something highly significant performed in heaven: a priestly act, not upon the altar of sacrifice,<sup>1</sup> but upon the golden altar of incense before the throne of God. Who can this priest be, introduced as an angel? Who else than Jesus, the faithful High Priest of his people before God, who, after having once appeared on earth to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, is now in the upper sanctuary, serving at the golden altar of incense before the throne of God? From this we learn: 1. At this time the saints of God on earth were praying. 2. Their prayers were made acceptable before God. 3. It is God's will that they should be made acceptable to him. There was much incense given to this Angel Priest for this purpose.

VERSE 5: "And the angel hath taken the censer; and he filled it with the fire of the altar, and cast it upon the earth; and there followed thunders and voices, and lightnings and an earthquake."

The censer of the heavenly Priest is now used for another purpose. It is not filled with incense, but with fire from the golden altar before the throne of God. Nor does it bring things up before God from this altar, but down toward the earth. It seems as if these were foreboding and warning voices from God to the earth. That thunders here come before lightnings is in a certain sense against nature. Only when a storm is coming, and yet far away, are thunders heard without seeing first the flashes of lightning. In our text, therefore, thunders may signify the announcement of a coming storm (judgment of God), lightnings indicate its nearness, voices (distinct sounds) show its presence, while the earthquake would tell of its effects. There is a progress visible in these foreboding signs. The first makes it known to the ear, the second to the eye, the third by distinct

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<sup>1</sup>See note 18.

expression to our understanding, the fourth makes us feel it.

VERSE 6: "And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound."

Each of them had his own commission, and had to sound in his own time, indicated by the course of events. Hence, each had to watch this course of events to be ready for the proper time. It is not to be supposed that they all sounded alike; but as there are different soundings of trumpets for different movements, so may the different events have been indicated and introduced by sounds of the trumpets suitable to each.

#### EXPLANATION OF THE FIRST TRUMPET.

REV. VIII, 7: "And the first sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth; and the third part of the earth was burnt up, and the third part of the trees was burnt up, and all the green grass was burnt up."

These words describe the first step in the great conflict of this Division of our Period. It is a step of destruction. Whether it comes from the adversary, or from the Church, will soon be decided by the signification of the figures here used.

SIGNIFICATION OF THESE FIGURES IN THE LIGHT OF SCRIPTURE.—"Hail and fire" are both means of destruction, and were one of the fearful plagues in Egypt;<sup>1</sup> but their natures contain other significations. "Hail" consists of the same elements as rain. It is moisture or water formed into smaller or larger pieces of ice, precipitated from the sky to the earth. As a strange feature in this will be noticed that hail is almost always directly connected with heat or hot weather, and thus moisture, which is indispensable to the growth of vegetation, and for which God has destined it, becomes by

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<sup>1</sup>Exod. ix, 18-25.

its transformation into ice a means of destruction to vegetation. In this twofold sense the Scripture uses it: "He gave them hail for rain, flaming fire in their land."<sup>1</sup>

"Fire" has likewise the opposite effect of hail. Moderate heat promotes vegetation; too much heat—fire—destroys it. We see, then, that these destructive agencies in their original state, unaffected by undue influence are the very means which favor vegetation, and moreover are always expected to act to that effect.

"Mingled with blood" means evidently that this destruction was accompanied by bloodshed.

"And they were cast upon the earth" must have more severely affected the earth than if it had simply fallen upon it. The earth, in opposition to the sea, which will be affected by the next trumpet, signifies here the religious sphere, the solid element from which the false prophet arises. From this element "a third part" was consumed. A third part of this hitherto existing solid foundation was destroyed. Of the different destructive powers mentioned by our text, fire seems to exercise the greatest influence. If thus the third part of the earth was destroyed, it is easily understood how also "the third part of the trees was burnt up," *i. e.*, the stronger plants on earth, grown by themselves or planted by the Lord.<sup>2</sup>

"Grass" is likewise a figure, signifying "men," as it is said: "All flesh is grass;"<sup>3</sup> but what our text calls "grass" signifies the blade or young plant of wheat.<sup>4</sup>

"Green" is the opposite of dry, and means something that has life. Christ said to the Jews: "For if they do these things in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry?" He, the life, calls himself a "green," *i. e.*, a living tree, and represents the Jews as a "dry" or

<sup>1</sup> Psa. cv, 32.    <sup>2</sup> See explanation of Rev. vii, 3.    <sup>3</sup> Isa. xl, 6.    <sup>4</sup> Matt. xiii, 26; Mark iv, 28.

“dead tree.” This figure of grass indicates that the young and tender plants of wheat—the beginners in the career of new life—were so much more injured by this destruction than the stronger plants, that not only one third, but all of them were destroyed. From all this it clearly appears that this prefigured destruction aims at the Christian Church, and that trees and green grass represent the constituent parts of that Church.

A SUMMARY OF THE SIGNIFICATION OF THIS PROPHECY.—Now, knowing in what manner the adversary makes his successful attacks upon the Church in this period, viz., by dissimulation, introducing evil into her under the form of good and useful things, we thus recognize in this prophecy just such an attack at the beginning of this Second Division of our Period: A very severe and extensive destruction successfully carried out under the form of furtherance to her growth, efficiency, and fruitfulness; and this kind of furtherance was exercised to such a degree that it became mingled with blood.

APPLICATION OF THIS PROPHECY TO HISTORY.—The question now is, when did such a destruction befall the Church? It might be said that just such a state of things existed from the times of the apostles to the Emperor Constantine, for a destruction of the strong ones of God’s plantings, and of the young and tender ones, was carried on almost without interruption. Our prophecy can not refer to this time, for these persecutions emanated from secular nations, and were a direct and overt resistance to the light and life of God in the Church. It came from the first beast. The main injury and the most successful resistance which the Church has to endure in this period, comes, according to Christ’s own declaration,<sup>1</sup> and according to the four riders,<sup>2</sup> from the second beast or false prophet. He assumes the

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xiii, 24-43.      <sup>2</sup> Rev. vi.

form of wheat, represents himself as wheat, and arises out of the midst of wheat, as we have seen in the First Division of our Period.

When, then, came such a destruction, so to say, out of the midst of the Church itself? We answer: With the Emperor Constantine. Before he professed Christianity, the Church grew and produced fruit—so far as it was produced—by means of the rain, warmth, and the powers of the spiritual heaven, where Christ is the head of the Church. From the time that Constantine became emperor it was he who undertook to further Christianity, and to make it grow by secular favors, imperial influence, and power. Here it came to pass that the greatest worldly power then existing, and what was called the Christian Church, united in wedlock. Henceforth the husband considered it his duty to make the affairs of his wife his own, to protect her, and to promote her interests in every way possible, and to the full extent of the ability which a secular power affords. True, Constantine did not force Christianity upon his subjects; he left it to their own choice, but his own position toward Christianity, and the manifold favors and inducements offered by him, prompted a signally larger number to the acceptance of an external form of Christianity than the power of the Word and Spirit of God transformed into real Christians. It is reported of Constantine that as early as the year 312 he legalized legacies to Catholic Churches. In the year 313 he exempted the Christian ecclesiastics from the burdensome municipal and war offices. In the year 315 he abolished several institutions offensive to the Christians; a year later he facilitated the emancipation of the Christian slaves. He also ordered the civil celebration of Sunday, gave liberal contributions for the building of Churches and the support of the clergy, removed the pagan symbols of Jupiter and Apollo, Mars and Hercules

on the imperial coins (year 323), and gave his sons a Christian education.

“The natural consequence of this mighty example was the multitudinous change of religion of such subjects as were in their manner of action guided more by outward circumstances and consideration than by inward conviction and solid principles. The saying that there were baptized in one year (324) in Rome twelve thousand men with a proportional number of women and children, and that the emperor had promised to each convert a white garment and twenty pieces of gold, is in any event characteristic of the spirit of this government, even if the fact itself is somewhat exaggerated.”<sup>1</sup>

How Constantine considered his relation to the Church he plainly showed by calling himself a universal bishop of the Church. Even before being baptized he presided at the first general synod. He also called together and presided at the first oecumenical council. At a banquet he plainly declared himself to be also a bishop over the external affairs of the Church, while it was the duty of the bishops proper to attend to the internal affairs.<sup>2</sup> Thus the worldly power began to thrust its meddling hand into the affairs of the Church. Herein lay hidden what in consequence became manifest: the application of worldly power even unto bloodshed.<sup>3</sup> No doubt, in all that Constantine did he meant to help the Church, though in reality it did not advance her spiritual welfare, but resulted in her great injury. This meddling of worldly power with the affairs of the Church, though intended as fructifying rain and warmth, could not, according to the antagonistic nature of this power applied to the spiritual furtherance of the Church, prove itself otherwise than destructive. The consequences of hail and fire mingled with blood cast into the realm of the Church were

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<sup>1</sup> Schaff, p. 464.

<sup>2</sup> Schaff, pp. 544, 545.

<sup>3</sup> Schaff, pp.

512, 513.



1. "The third part of the earth was burnt up." Instead of what the Church in all probability firmly expected—namely, that her element, and ground upon which she stood, as trees and green grass, would by this union with the worldly power gain considerably in many respects, just the reverse happened. She lost a considerable part of her inestimable ground. Fully one-third of it was destroyed by excessive warmth—consumed. The injury to her foundation which the Church here suffered is therefore very great. To lose so much of one's ground by the first move of a series of new and sly attacks from an indiscernible enemy is no small matter, and rather ominous; the more so when one is so blinded as to throw himself with full confidence into the arms of his enemy. The union of the Church with the worldly power is one of the greatest evils, and a root of the mightiest corruptions which ever originated in the Church. It is the turning-point toward the greatest degenerations which ever appeared under the name of Christianity, and on account of which God brought, in the course of time, over the earth the most fearful judgments known to history. In addition to this destruction of the third part of the Church's own ground, it is stated that

2. "The third part of the trees was burnt up." If John the Baptist calls those men, obliged to repent, trees, and if even pious men are also called trees, so may also here both these classes be meant, though especially the last named. We have, then, in this sense to understand such a number of strong plants and prominent men in the Church. How could they be burned or destroyed? Very probably in a similar manner as those good seeds which grew, but were scorched by the heat of the sun and withered away;<sup>1</sup> or like those seeds which fell upon thorns and were choked by them. Scripture and experience teach us that abundance in worldly things—as,

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<sup>1</sup> Matt. xiii, 6.

rising to honor and high position, ease, riches, etc.—do not further spiritual life, but rather hinder and endanger it.<sup>1</sup> The danger of being easily led astray is greater still in sudden transitions from a low to a high position.<sup>2</sup> Yea, the Lord says directly in regard to this matter: “It is easier for a camel to go through a needle’s eye than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.”<sup>3</sup>

In the times of Constantine the love of riches and luxury was exceedingly great, yet how little those who joined the Church gave up that love of riches, appears clearly from a description of the condition of the Church in the times following. “The secularization of the Church showed itself most strikingly in the prevailing service of mammon and luxury in comparison with the poverty and simplicity of the first Christians. The aristocracy of the later empire had a passionate predilection for outward show and the sensual enjoyments of riches, without the taste, refinement of manners and humanity of true civilization. The masters measured their happiness according to their palaces of marble, baths, slaves, and gilded carriages. The women were pleased by wearing dresses of silk interwoven with gold and decorated with worldly and religious figures, heavy golden necklaces, bracelets and finger-rings, and in such tawdriness they visited the church as well as the theater. Gregory, of Nazianzen, who at a former time presided at the second œcumenical council in Constantinople (381) gives us the following evidently flowery yet life-like picture of the luxury of the degenerated civilization of this time: ‘We repose splendidly upon high and magnificent cushions, upon the most exquisite covers which one may hardly touch, and we are offended if we but hear the voice of an imploring, indigent person; our room must be filled with the fragrance of rare flowers, our table must over-

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xiii, 22; 1 Cor. i, 26–29; ii, 8; 1 Tim. vi, 9, 10.

<sup>2</sup> Prov. xxx, 21–23. <sup>3</sup> Matt. xix, 24.

flow with the sweetest scented and costliest ointments, so that we shall become completely effeminate. Slaves must stand in readiness, beautifully adorned, with waving, girl-like hair, but closely shorn in the face, and on the whole more adorned than is good for lustful eyes. Some must gracefully and firmly hold the cups with the tips of the fingers, while others use the fan with all dexterity. Our table must bend beneath the weight of dishes so generously furnished by all the realms of nature, air, water, and earth; while scarcely room can be found for the artifices of the cook and baker. . . . The poor are satisfied with water, but we fill our cups unto drunkenness; yea, more, the intemperate beyond drunkenness. Some wine we despise, some we declare fragrant and excellent, while over a third kind we engage in philosophical discussions; yea, we regard it essential that to the native wine a foreign be added as king.' Still more unfavorable are the descriptions given half a century later by the Gallican presbyter, Salvianus, of the prevailing moral condition of the Christians in the Roman Empire."<sup>1</sup>

In harmony with this inclination of mind were also THE CHURCHES BUILT AND ADORNED. "Constantine and his mother, Helen, were at the head of this with a good example. . . . His successors to the throne, with the exception of Julian, as also bishops and rich laymen, vied with each other in the building, embellishment, and enrichment of churches. This was considered a meritorious work well pleasing to God. Chrysostom complains even that often the poor are forgotten on account of building churches, and recalls to mind that it be not enough to adorn the altar, the walls, and the floor, but that before all things we should present our soul a living sacrifice to the Lord."<sup>2</sup> It is true that suitable places of worship for the people are not harmful, but helpful, and so far

<sup>1</sup>Schaff, pp. 530-540.      <sup>2</sup>Schaff, p. 862.

there was no harm done. Certain things may, at a certain time and under certain circumstances prove themselves injurious and destructive, which at another time and under other circumstances would not only have proved harmless, but even a great blessing. It depends on the condition of the people whether they are sufficiently prepared for the reception of such things or not. Even of a good thing there may be too much. Wherever this is the case, it will, in spite of its goodness, tend to injury. The effect of excessive earthly influence over our spiritual being must, from its very nature, prove injurious. To the Christians of that time who until very lately were severely persecuted, possessing only very simple or no meeting-houses at all, nay, who were often compelled to hold their meetings secretly, this great change brought too many good things unexpectedly, and with overpowering effect. It surpassed their power of bearing as well as their power of comprehension. It proved itself not as moderate heat which furthered the growth of the divine plants, but as excessive heat which consumed them.

OF THE PUBLIC WORSHIP it is said: "The Church of the Nicæan age laid aside her humble form of a servant, and put on the splendid garment of a ruler. She exchanged her former simplicity of worship for a variegated multiplicity. She now engaged all the fine arts in the service of the sanctuary. Public worship received a dramatic, so to say, a theatrical character, and became thereby more charming and imposing for the mass of the people, who, in a great measure, were incapable of worshipping God in spirit and in truth. It was directed more to the eye and ear, to the sensibility and fantasy, than to the intelligence and will."<sup>1</sup>

PAY OF CHURCH OFFICES.—"In former times the clergy were entirely dependent upon the voluntary contributions of the faithful, who were mostly poor; but

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<sup>1</sup> Schaff, pp. 732, 733.

now they received a fixed income from the funds of the Church, and out of the purse of the state and civil community. . . . Even this improvement of the external condition of the clergy had, according to the moral character of the latter, an opposite effect. It raised them above the pinching and distracting cares of sustenance, made them more independent, and gave them opportunity to devote their undivided strength to their office. It also promoted ease and luxury, . . . and diminished the exercise of the duty of liberality on the part of the Church. The worthy bishops, as, Athanasius, both of the Gregorys, Basilus, Chrysostom, Theodoret, Ambrosius, and Augustine, lived for themselves in ascetic solitude and used their incomes for the public welfare, while others gratified their vanity, love of splendor, and inordinate longings for enjoyment."<sup>1</sup> As is manifest, this imperial and secular favor made them to a great extent independent of the Churches, and as lay in the nature of the case, they soon became lords and masters of the Church.

All these and various other means employed since the time of Constantine intended to promote the spiritual growth of divine plants, proved themselves not as fructifying rain and warmth, but as injurious hail and burning heat. Now, admitting that the Lord's declaration concerning the salvation of the rich allows some exceptions, so that some rich were saved and may yet be saved, nevertheless, the word of the Lord remains an irrefragable truth, that riches and all those things which strengthen the sensual mind, actually exercise a destructive influence upon the spirit. Hence, if from a number of Christians placed in such circumstances, two-thirds escape unhurt, and only one-third is destroyed, as in our text, it is to be considered a wonder that only such a small number were destroyed by this hail and fire.

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<sup>1</sup>Schaff, p. 792.

3. "And all green grass was burnt up." This doubtless means those who as a new seed (blade) make their appearance in the Church. The First Division of our Period was the time of the sowing and growth of the seed hidden in the earth. In this Second Division we see the seed as having pierced the ground and shown itself as green grass. Young and tender plants can stand the least. It takes little to destroy them. If, then, the worldly influence was so vigorous that older and much stronger plants succumbed, that influence must have proved much more destructive upon those tender newcomers, so that not only a part, but all of them perished. The natural fire of imperial and secular influence was too strong for those willing to become Christians. Thus, as soon as the seed of the word had developed in them, broken through the ground and shown itself as a tender blade, it was immediately burned. Such was the result of secular influence. Secularization of Christianity is the destruction of Christianity. Thus even those who really experienced the power of the word were, as a rule, overpowered by the prevailing deadening influence. As repentance and faith soon ceased to be the requisites of admittance into the Church, and every one was welcomed upon a mere formal profession, nay, when people were induced by external means to join the Church, Christianity was killed from the start. "These injurious consequences may in general be designated as a secularization of the Church. By the reception of the entire population of the Roman Empire, the Church became, indeed, a Church of the masses or of the people, and at the same time, in a certain measure, a Church of the world."<sup>1</sup>

"Mingled with blood," is mentioned after hail and fire. It also followed historically with these in the application of secular power for the pretended furtherance

<sup>1</sup> Schaff, 538.

of the unity of faith. Already "Constantine issued penal laws against the Donatists, a very numerous Church party, that insisted on discipline and purity of the Church in general, threatening them with banishment of their bishops and confiscation of their churches. However, seeing the fruitlessness of religious constraint, he gave them, by an edict in the year 321 complete liberty of faith and worship. . . . Constantine's successor, Constans, had again recourse to violent measures, but neither threatenings nor promises made an impression on the party. Bloody scenes ensued."<sup>1</sup> While now the Donatists took up arms, resisting force with force, and then being in consequence suppressed by military power, several of their head men were executed, others banished, etc. Thus, exactly that occurred which the second rider and seal declares of this Second Division of our Period: "That they slay one another."<sup>2</sup> Later the Donatists again conducted themselves worthy of the example of Christ. One of their bishops, Petilianus, against whom Augustine had written, asks in this way: "Do you think to serve God by murdering us with your own hand? Ye err, ye err, if ye miserable ones believe this. God has no hangmen for priests. Christ teaches us to suffer wrong, not to do it." The Donatic bishop, Gaudentius, says: "God has for the propagation of the faith appointed prophets and fishers, but not princes and soldiers."<sup>3</sup> The emperor, Theodosius, the Great, also issued, in the course of fifteen years, at least fifteen penal laws against heretics, by which they were gradually deprived of all rights of religious exercise, excluded from civil offices, threatened with mulct, confiscation, banishment, and some of them, namely the Manichees, Audians, and even the Quartodecimans, with death.<sup>4</sup> The first tortured and executed with the sword for their religious opinions were

<sup>1</sup> Schaff, 722, 723.<sup>2</sup> Rev. vi, 4.<sup>3</sup> Schaff, 554.<sup>4</sup> Schaff, 551.

the Spanish bishop, Priscillian, with six prominent adherents in the year 385.

THE MANNER IN WHICH THIS DESTRUCTION IS ACCOMPLISHED.—In this the reader will easily perceive the movements of the false prophet. All the destructive acts are performed under the pretext of effecting good things. He uses not hail and fire, but natural irrigation and warmth. Humanly considered, his intention is not destruction, but the furtherance of the divine cause. So is in like manner his shedding of blood a holy zeal for God, and simply the application of Church discipline by the power of the state, a duty plainly devolving upon the state since the Church has become a state institution. In all this is manifest the nature and spirit of that beast with horns like a lamb in Rev. xiii, 11.

THIS FIRST TRUMPET A FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF THE CONDITION OF THE SEVEN CHURCHES IN ASIA.—It is also equally clear how such a formation and progress, like that introduced here by the first trumpet, could become possible, namely: the existing elements of evil described to us by the Lord in the seven Churches of Asia did not remain so in the same degree as they then were, but grew worse, and effected such a loose state of things generally, that the formation of the conditions, seen in the time of Constantine, could easily take place.

It ought not to be forgotten that this first trumpet, like every first part of any seven or four, is the fundamental tone of that which follows. It characterizes in general the nature of all the four.

## SECOND TRUMPET.

REV. VIII, 8: "And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea."

Here another element is touched, the sea, from which the beast comes as a combination of organizations of mere



animal nature and tendency. A mountain signifies a kingdom.<sup>1</sup> The stone which smote that image, which Daniel saw, became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth. This mountain signifies the (future) kingdom of Christ on earth. So the Lord calls Babylon a "destroying mountain."<sup>2</sup> "As it were a great mountain" means to say, something like a great kingdom. "Burning with fire"—seized by this element of destruction. "Was cast into the sea"—thrown in among the nations that constitute this sea.

"And the third part of the sea became blood."

This shows us doubtless that casting this mountain into the sea caused a great slaughter, so that the third part of those constituting the sea were not only touched by the blood, but were killed; and their blood being thus shed, they became blood.

VERSE 9: "And there died the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, even they that had life."

The dying seems to be the consequence of this blood in the sea, and indicates that it chiefly affected the creatures of that part of the sea which had become blood. Who were these creatures? They were certainly not those single persons who constitute this sea, and who have already become blood. It must mean other creatures, such as we had occasion to notice before, and of which the seven-headed monster is a specimen, nay, is a combination of many such creatures moving in this sea, as also Daniel saw coming up from this sea.<sup>3</sup> The psalmist also speaks of such creatures: "Thou didst divide the sea by thy strength: thou brakest the heads of the dragons in the waters. Thou brakest the head of leviathan in pieces, and gavest him to be meat to the people inhabiting the wilderness."<sup>4</sup> Likewise the orig-

<sup>1</sup> Dan. ii, 35.  
lxxiv, 13, 14.

<sup>2</sup> Jer. li, 25.

<sup>3</sup> Dan. vii, 2-9.

<sup>4</sup> Psal.

inal in 1 Peter ii, 13, calls such a worldly institution "a creation," or "creature." It should be remarked that the expression *that had life* reads in the original *that had soul*; a term signifying life and soul existence in more than one respect. When it is used in the adjective form it directly signifies animal or natural, as when Paul says: "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God;"<sup>1</sup> the original reads, "the soul man," etc., and again: "It is sown a natural body;"<sup>2</sup> the original reads, "the soul body." Thus a difference is to be made between life merely designated by "soul," and life designated by "soul of life," which we shall find in Rev. xvi, 3. It appears, then, that these creatures in the sea, which had soul and died, were nothing else than the many great and smaller worldly institutions of peoples of that time, which perished as such institutions at the sounding of the second trumpet. Not only did then the third part of those who constituted this human sea become blood, but so powerful was the rush of this great mountain or kingdom that it annihilated the third part of national institutions.

"And the third part of the ships was destroyed."

The ships in this sea with their great loads and moveable property of every kind, designate not only the commerce of the nations, but, indeed, all the riches and property which they possess. The destruction of the third part of these ships signifies the destruction of all such riches and property of this sea of nations.

Briefly stated, and without figure, this prophecy would read thus: A great kingdom, being in itself seized by a destructive fire, was cast among the leading nations of the world, in consequence of which there was a third part of the men slaughtered; a third part of the national

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. ii, 14.    <sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. xv, 44, 46; comp. James iii, 15, and Jude xix.

institutions ceased to exist, and a third part of all property was destroyed.

APPLICATION OF THIS PROPHECY TO HISTORY.—Of this every word finds its fulfillment in the fearful invasion of Europe by the Huns, beginning in the year 374, and ending several years after the death of their leader, Attila. (He began his reign in the year 433, and died 453.) The reader will find a full explanation of this subject in any good universal history. We have only room for a few short notices which directly prove the fulfillment of this prophecy, and translate from Dr. Karl v. Rotteck's *Allgemeine Weltgeschichte*, Volume II, Stuttgart, 1846.

1. That the Huns appeared "as it were a great mountain"—a great kingdom—is proved from the fact that they had a king, and that they were really a very numerous and physically a very strong people.

2. "Burning with fire"—seized by this element of destruction. This has a twofold signification. First, a destruction of all that with which this great mountain comes in contact: of the sea into which it is cast, and of the creatures and ships that are in this sea. Second, a destruction of this mountain or kingdom itself.

In regard to the first signification, history proves how great a destruction this mountain has caused in this sea of nations: a third part of it became blood, a third part of the creatures died, and a third part of the ships—property—was destroyed. Rotteck says: "The monuments of art and industry, the traces of wealth and taste disappear. The fixed habitations of generations thronged together, the cities—they sink into dust. In the vast empire of Attila there was not one city. Half of Europe served as pastures and camps for wandering hordes. Only the Vandals attained the horrible notoriety of the Huns by a similar rage for destruction."<sup>1</sup> It is stated

<sup>1</sup> Rotteck, vol. ii, p. 11.

that in a single battle on the Marne (451) there fell in one day 162,000 men (according to the statement of others 300,000 men).<sup>1</sup> "Attila," says Rotteck,<sup>2</sup> "was born to be a conqueror or destroyer. Not long after his elevation he made known to the nations the title to the dominion of the world, which he coveted. That was a sword which he had found, and which, according to the religious conceptions of the Huns, was not only a sure sign of divine favor, but even the image of God himself. He soon showed that he understood how to handle it by killing his brother, and by bloody desolations of all the countries around him. Peoples and kings were trodden in the dust by this great conqueror. This he did openly, without any pretense whatever. He showed his claws freely, and called himself the rod of God."<sup>3</sup>

The second signification that this great mountain of the Huns was in itself seized and swallowed up by this destructive element, appears from the fact that with the death of Attila the power of the Huns, and gradually their existence as a nation, vanished. His sons quarreled about the inheritance. The hordes separated. The subjugated nations perceived the moment of revenge. Ardarich, king of the Gepides, and with him the three East-Gothic princes and other chiefs broke their fetters in a bloody battle, and killed Ellak, Attila's valiant son. Irnak, the youngest of these sons, saved for a time the name, rather than the dominion of the Huns, in some remote parts of the Black Sea, but even these last fragments of the empire of the world were soon swallowed up by the Avares.<sup>4</sup>

3. "Was cast into the sea." The high mountains of Middle Asia are designated as the former abode of the Huns. In the year 374 they concluded to pass over the

<sup>1</sup> Rotteck, p. 39.

<sup>2</sup> Rotteck, p. 37.

<sup>3</sup> Rotteck, p. 37.

<sup>4</sup> Rotteck, p. 40.

Volga. . . . The next step brought them over the Don into Europe. . . . Suddenly tidings were received of the approach of hitherto unknown frightful hordes.<sup>1</sup> This caused an immense commotion among the nations, as it was also the chief motive for the approaching awful wars of the Goths, Alans, Vandals, Burgundians, and others. "The storm of the Westgoths and Vandals had not yet ceased to rage when the Huns, who had given Europe its first shock, were carrying their own destructive weapons into the heart of this part of the world. During a full generation these fiends had taken up their abode in the northern countries of the lower Danube and of the Euxine, wasting their strength in dishonorable expeditions of rapine—sometimes even in the service of their conquered enemies—and preserving in the loose connection of the hordes scarcely more than the figure of a great nation."<sup>2</sup> Hence it is only after these proceedings, and with Attila, about the year 433, that "this mountain burning with fire" was fully cast into the sea of nations.

4. "And there died the third part of the creatures which were in the sea." The effect which these immense commotions and destructions produced upon the existing national institutions is likewise described by history: "All the provinces of the Western Roman Empire changed hands and came into the possession of barbarous nations. The Vandals took possession of Africa; the Alans, Sueves, and Westgoths took possession of Spain and the southern part of Gaul; the Burgundians took possession of the countries of the Saone; the Alemans took possession of the Upper Rhine; the Franks took possession of the north and east of Gaul; the Angles and Saxons took possession of Britain; the Rugians and Herulians took possession of Norcium and surrounding countries; the Eastgoths took possession of Italy and parts of Rhætia

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<sup>1</sup> Rotteck, pp. 26, 27.    <sup>2</sup> Rotteck, pp. 36, 37.

and Illyricum. . . . Most of these kingdoms first established, and even many of those built later upon the ruins of the preceding ones, perished in this changeful time. Even the names of many peoples were lost; with others independence at least ceased, and the changes of boundaries were almost innumerable."<sup>1</sup>

It is to be specially noticed that the sixth head of the beast—the Roman Empire itself—fell from the strokes it received from these destructive powers in the year 476. It is significant that the Revelation does in some way, though in mere general terms—as seen in this second trumpet—indicate the time and circumstances when that fourth beast of Daniel, that terrible and ferocious creature of the sea of nations, should become as it had been smitten unto death.<sup>2</sup>

THE PURPOSE OF THIS TRUMPET can hardly be misunderstood. It is a fearful visitation on the secular organizations, and especially on the Roman Empire. It is an awful shedding of blood, a great destruction of property. Every one of these organizations is shaken to its foundation, loosed from its moorings, and sent shifting about, while no less than one-third of them went down and ceased to exist. This blow is therefore not aimed at the Church, but at that worldly power which, just a little while ago, meddled so detrimentally with the affairs of the Church, after having achieved an unholy union with her. It is a severe punishment for the worldly element, to which, of course, the Church could not feel indifferent, for that element or power was her newly accepted husband. We see, then, in this trumpet the chastising hand of God interposing in behalf of his cause. We see in it an opposition and counteraction to the wicked advance made by the adversary in the preceding trumpet.

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<sup>1</sup> Rotteck, vol. ii, pp. 7, 8.    <sup>2</sup> Rev. xiii, 3.

## THIRD TRUMPET.

REV. VIII, 10: "And the third angel sounded, and there fell from heaven a great star, burning as a torch."

Stars signify angels, according to our Lord's own explanation. A great star signifies a great angel, capable of doing a great work. He fell from heaven. Good angels do not fall from heaven,<sup>1</sup> they descend. From this and from his work we perceive that he is not a good angel. Heaven here means the airy region where evil spirits or evil angels are,<sup>2</sup> and from which locality this evil angel had hitherto exercised his influence upon the men on the earth; but now he changes his abode and rushes to the earth itself, as his personal presence on it will evidently enable him to prosecute his work with much greater success. This falling from heaven corresponds with what is said of the dragon, that he drew the third part of the stars of heaven and cast them to the earth. Some of the dragon's influence is here manifest.

"Burning as a torch"—an apparent light. Christ said of John the Baptist: "He was a burning and shining light." Burning designates the fiery character of Elijah in John, his warmth and his zeal in the service of the Lord. John also is called an angel.<sup>3</sup> There is, then, between him and the angel of our text some similarity. Both are angels, lights, and burning; but from John streamed forth the true light, for which reason he was also a shining light, while the one in our text is only a torchlight, whose burning does not give forth the life-giving sunlight, but fire. Hence he thus appears rather as a counterfeit of John, and may be set down as an evil angel out of the regions of evil spirits against which we have to wrestle.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Luke x, 18; Rev. x, 1; John i, 51.   <sup>2</sup> Eph. ii, 2; vi, 12.

<sup>3</sup> Matt. xi, 10.   <sup>4</sup> Eph. vi, 12.

“And it fell upon the third part of the rivers.”

Waters signify nations;<sup>1</sup> and if all the nations together are called “the sea,” single nations could not be better represented than by the single rivers which flow into the sea and thereby form the element of the latter. This explanation of rivers is confirmed by the context: the first trumpet affected the earth and the plants therein; the second affected the sea with the things therein, and the third affects the rivers with the things related to them. Now rivers connect with the land and with the sea, and while they are neither land nor sea, they lie as a third part between these. This third part, then, not yet affected by the previous trumpets, is now touched by the third trumpet.

The relations in which the nations are affected under these three trumpets are: under the first trumpet, the nations in their religious tendency; under the second trumpet, the nations in their natural and animal tendency; under the third trumpet, the nations as nations in both these tendencies. That great angel, then, fell upon one-third part of the nations as such. “To fall upon them” seems to indicate to bring them under his influence. The greatness and extent of this sphere leads us to the conclusion that this great angel is not alone, but only the leader of a host of spirits adequate to and necessary for the work to be performed.

“And upon the fountains of the waters.”

This can not mean the origin of rivers, else the term “rivers” would be used instead of “waters;” hence, it refers not to nations, but as the following verse shows, to the use which men make of water by drinking it. “The fountains of waters” here signify something similar, as in the words of the prophet: “Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters;” and as Jesus

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<sup>1</sup> Rev. xvii, 15.



says: "I will give unto him who is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely." Here are meant words and doctrines—spiritual water—which men drink and receive into their hearts.

VERSE 11: "And the name of the star is called Wormwood; and the third part of the waters became wormwood."

The name of the star indicates its nature, which is the symbol of bitterness. Wormwood is connected with rosh, a poisonous plant.<sup>1</sup> The taste of manna, the symbol of the bread of life was sweet, and so is also the water of life which Christ giveth. Consequently, it appears quite natural that water of an opposite nature and taste has an opposite effect, and is instead of life-preserving, life-destroying, as is further stated:

"And many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter."

This refers especially to the waters used as a drink. They proved to many who drank them life-destroying. To make them thus life-destroying, or bitter, was the chief work of this great star or angel, fallen from heaven, whereby he at the same time, so far as he succeeded, made also the rivers or nations bitter.

THIS PROPHECY DIRECTLY AND BRIEFLY EXPRESSED.—With its figures thus explained, this prophecy would in simple language read thus: When the third angel sounded, there fell from the airy region or lower part of heaven a great angel, appearing as a light, but being in fact a false light, for its nature is wormwood, and its effect spiritual death. Having by falling upon the third part of the nations—confessing Christianity—come in such close proximity to them, he succeeded in subjecting them so fully that they did not perceive his malicious purpose, nor how much he perverted the Christian doctrines, by making them destructive. They

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<sup>1</sup> Deut. xxix, 18.

accepted his suggestions and decrees as divine, drinking them in as the true water of life, in consequence of which many men lost the salvation of their souls—died spiritually.

NOT MUCH EXTERNAL, BUT STILL VERY IMPORTANT HISTORY.—This trumpet brings little external history before us, for the things happening are not brought about by visible or material instruments, and hence are not a material work. On that account this in no way weakens the importance of what happens here; on the contrary it increases it. For if, according to the Scripture, evil spiritual powers lie at the bottom of this great warfare, and if we, individually and collectively as the divine party, have constantly to wrestle against these evil spiritual beings, is it not of higher importance to see a great deed represented, done by these unseen spiritual powers, than a deed simply performed by their visible servile agents? Again, as these spirits or angels are the chief leaders in this warfare, is it not just that some of their extraordinary schemes, as for instance a change of their position for a new attack, which may cause great injury to the divine party, be also presented in figures or in words? It would really seem as if the existence and the effect of the participation of these hostile spiritual powers in this warfare were ignored, if no room were allowed for the historical representation of their most important deeds by the side of the deeds performed through their visible and mere subordinate instrumentalities.

REMARK.—To deny or doubt that good as well as evil angels take an active part in the events of our history, is to rob the Word of God of a great many clear and decisive testimonies, among which see the following.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Gen. xxiv, 7, 8; Ex. xxiii, 20-23; 1 Kings xxii, 19-23; 2 Kings vi, 15-17; xix, 35; 1 Chron. xx, 14-16; Job i, 12-19; Psa. lxxviii, 49; Dan. x, 13, 14, 20.

APPLICATION TO HISTORY.—This prophecy shows us the instrument through which at this time the doctrines of the Church were made bitter, causing death. As false doctrines had been sown in the times of the apostles, and were already existing in two of the seven Churches of Asia, and as is manifest that they developed still more from that time to the third trumpet, our prophecy here can not refer to their coming into existence, because they existed long ago. The false prophet or the second beast had, during more than four hundred years, constantly influenced the men and told them to make an image to the beast, which had the stroke of the sword and lived,<sup>1</sup> *i. e.*, that they should introduce into the Church all kinds of innovations, mere human and false doctrines, so that at the time of this third trumpet the whole system of doctrines, and the Church herself, were thoroughly secularized. Every thing was formed according to the worldly tastes of the leading Church members, and according to the pattern of the Roman state institution. Consequently this whole Church system became in fact an image of the first beast, which represents, and is, the world. From the progress which the false doctrines had made to that time, it may safely be accepted that this image of the beast, thus made by men under the direction of the false prophet, was at this time the same as completed. For, so far as the doctrines and usages of public worship are concerned, it was said of a time even before this: "In short, we meet in the Nicean age, in nearly all essential features, the priestly, mysterious, multiform, and symbolic worship of the Greek and Roman Church."<sup>2</sup> This image was also complete in regard to the form of Church government. Popery was already introduced, though not in the powerful and high-sounding form in which it appeared under Gregory VII. Even popery rose gradually, and at the same time kept pace with the changes

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<sup>1</sup> Rev. xiii. 14.<sup>2</sup> Schaff, 733.

of doctrines in the Christian system, and though it found in its rise not a few opponents, the great majority submitted. Thus have men also—the great majority of the secularized Church—made popery, under the direction and influence of the false prophet. A government of this sort was suitable for this world-church, and a necessity. To a monarchical constitution belongs also a monarch to make a consistent whole. The first pope, in the true sense of the term, is said to have been Leo I, the Great. He was unanimously elected pope by the clergy, the senate, and the people, in the year 440, holding this position twenty-one years.<sup>1</sup> This *world-church system* was thus here completed; it had an external representative—a visible head—like that of the Roman Empire.

Consider well what the Lord says to us through John of this image of the beast, after the men had made it: “And it was given unto him (to the false prophet) to give life to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak and cause that as many as should not worship the image of the beast should be killed.”<sup>2</sup> With this statement compare further what our text says, that, through the falling of this great angel, called Wormwood, upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of the waters, the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter. This wormwood-angel, or spirit, imparts evidently his bitter nature to these doctrines, uniting or mixing himself with them, by which they become deadly. He occupies and animates from this time, this system. He possesses and rules from this time, this image of the beast. He speaks from this time, out of it and through it to men, as Jesus speaks out of the Gospel and through it to men. In the eyes of men it is the image of the beast or the system thus brought about by the Church that speaks; but in reality it is this devil Number Three, the animator of this image, who speaks.

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<sup>1</sup> Schaff, 687.    <sup>2</sup> Rev. xiii, 15.

From this new position here assumed, and from his murderous intentions, it appears that he is not only effecting spiritual, but also corporal death; for he causes that as many as do not worship the image of the beast, shall be killed—suffer corporal death. While those who worship it—receive it as a divine doctrine unto salvation—will suffer spiritual death.

Now, who this star or evil angel, fallen from heaven, really is, can no longer be a mystery. The Revelation describes him sufficiently.<sup>1</sup> So also the purpose of his fall from the lower heaven to the earth is clearly seen. He came, so to say, to embody himself in this Church-system—the image of the beast—to dwell in it and animate it, in order to unfold and manifest through it his great devilish power and hypocrisy. Thus will then his falling upon the third part of the rivers be understood. These rivers are doubtless those men who long before willingly yielded to his influence, and who thus made that false Church-system or image of the beast. Consequently he will, in his falling from heaven, make just these peoples his seat, lay hold on them, that they will be, so to say, possessed by him, and in such a position will he also exercise upon the fountains of waters—the doctrines—a much mightier influence.

THE OBJECT OF THIS TRUMPET is easily perceived. It is simply a further development of the work whose beginning we saw in that evil seed secretly sown by the devil in the field of the Lord. Besides the successful growth of this seed in the times of the apostles, and in the seven Churches of Asia, we were shown one chief stage of its development in the first trumpet, and in this third trumpet we now see another chief stage, in fact, a further mighty progress in the same work. In harmony with the law of four we shall see in the fourth trumpet, in some measure, the completion of this work.

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<sup>1</sup> Rev. xiii, 11–18.

## HOW THESE THREE TRUMPETS TOGETHER REPRESENT THE SECOND DIVISION OF OUR PERIOD.

The second rider represents this Second Division thus: "He appears upon a fire-colored horse—an emblem of fire and destruction. To the rider himself was given to take peace from the earth, and that they should slay one another: and there was given unto him a great sword." All this is clearly contained in the various figures of these three trumpets.

The first has hail and fire mingled with blood. Fire destroys the third part of the earth, and the third part of the older and stronger plants of the Lord, and all of the young plants, the green blades just piercing the ground. Strife and persecutions begin reciprocally among Church members, even unto bloodshed.

The second trumpet has as it were a great mountain burning with fire cast into the sea of nations, whereby the third part of the sea became blood. In addition to to this there was a destruction of the third part of the then existing national organizations and the destruction of a third part of all kinds of property in the sea of nations.

At the third trumpet there falls from heaven a great star, burning as a torch, affecting the third part of the rivers and the fountains of the waters. This star is that angel of Satan who makes the waters bitter so that many men died; who also from this time takes possession of the image of the beast, giving it life, and causing that as many as do not worship the image of the beast shall be killed. Thus we see how these three trumpets, though differing from each other in some respects, have in common the characters described by the second rider. The fire-character, represented by the fire-colored horse, is as a destroying element in all of the three trumpets. So is strife and bloodshed in all of the three. It is a great strife, as the great sword of this second rider signifies.

## THE ALTO.

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### Third Division of our Period.

#### The Times of Famine and Darkness,

SPECIFIED BY

THE FOURTH, FIFTH, AND SIXTH TRUMPETS.

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REV. VIII, 12: "And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; that the third part of them should be darkened, and the day should not shine for the third part of it, and the night in like manner."

The glorious picture of Rev. xii, 1, whose historical realities we first considered in the Treble, is here again before us. We perceive in it the main features of the Church of God, as they were formed in her course of development from the beginning to the present time. The Church of God is here not literally named, but the features represented tell us clearly and definitely who is meant by them, and so does the connection of this fourth with the three foregoing trumpets.

The sun represents that feature which was formed in her in the present dispensation—the divine light and life of Christ. "The Lord God is a sun and shield."<sup>1</sup> Christ is the Sun of righteousness;<sup>2</sup> hence, so far as he imparts this divine nature to his faithful, they not only are clad with it, but it becomes a part of their nature; it forms their new nature in Christ. For if Christ by virtue of his new humanity—made new in his resurrection—is the man, and the Church the woman, created out of him, of

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<sup>1</sup> Ps. lxxxiv, 12.    <sup>2</sup> Mal. iv, 2.

his flesh and bones, then, if Christ is a sun, the Church must also have the same nature. It is, however, possible that this sun-nature may be covered and its brightness be in part impaired. We see this in the natural sun, in the moon, and in the stars; and this may in a measure help to explain the darkening in our text.

It is chiefly *the light* that suffers here. While the sun is a figure of the light and life, which the Church of God received through Christ, it is plainly seen that only, or chiefly, the light is suffering here; for a third part of the sun, moon, and stars smitten affects simply the light of these. A third part of it is to be darkened. No injury to life is mentioned. Of course, darkness may darken, but not really injure or diminish it. This light and life being so closely connected, the suffering of the one must also somewhat affect the other. Still only the light actually suffers here; a special and most powerful attack upon the life will be made at a later time.

“That the third part of them should be darkened, and the day should not shine for the third part of it.”

The day is the time during which one-half of our earth is illuminated by the sun. The night is the time during which the same half of our earth is lying in the shade. God also called the light day, and the darkness night;<sup>1</sup> hence the Church of God, illuminated by the divine sunlight, is the day,<sup>2</sup> and the darkening of a third part of this light in her must necessarily lessen the light one-third. It is also well to remark that it is here not the so-called Catholic or secularized Church that suffers, but the one which had God's light, life, and truth, the one which God acknowledged as his own..

The moon is that light which was the chief feature in the Mosaic institution: a reflection of the sunlight of Christ and his salvation, this being there in its manifold

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<sup>1</sup> Gen. i, 5.      <sup>2</sup> 1 Thess. v, 4-8.



relations prefigured by external things; hence the moon signified there and signifies still in the New Covenant the external institution of the Church with all the external things established by Christ. Though these may not be indispensably necessary to salvation, yet they naturally arise out of its spiritual nature, and are necessary to the true external form of God's institution. Their destruction is a destruction of divine light and of divine testimonies. These were smitten here so "that the third part of them should be darkened, and the night in like manner." The night is the shadowed part of the Church of God in her external divine institutions; and in so far as she, in this respect, ought to have shone in her full light, there was a third part of it darkened.

*The stars are angels.* As such ministering spirits we find them in the seven Churches of Asia, hence also in all other Churches of God, exercising a guiding influence over the entire Church on earth in the future (fourth) period, as a crown of twelve stars.<sup>1</sup> That the influence and service of angels may meet with opposition is seen in the case of Michael, the greatest or the prince of angels, who stands for the people of God, and who with his hosts met with opposition and war from evil angels.<sup>2</sup> Thus is here also the third part of that light darkened which the ministry of these angels gives to the Churches.

HOW, AND BY WHOM, THIS DARKENING WAS EFFECTED.—Consider first what position the dandel, sowed by the devil, assumes toward the wheat. The dandel is sowed so close to the wheat that the roots of both seeds intermingle, and by pulling up the dandel the wheat is also rooted up with it. Thus the dandel robs the wheat of its nutriment, and hinders its growth. Again, in growing so close to the wheat it is constantly standing in its way, depriving it of the sunlight, especially in places where it is found more abundant and of sturdier growth

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<sup>1</sup> Rev. xii, 1.      <sup>2</sup> Rev. xii, 7.

than the wheat. All kinds of weeds are injurious to wheat; and in this parable of the Lord the darnel is represented as very injurious and darkening.<sup>1</sup> It hinders the growth, and injures the appearance of the wheat.

Again, the change of position of the false prophet, the author of all the disguised evil in the Church of God, who had hitherto from the lower heaven influenced the men, but who has now come personally to the earth and made, so to say, his abode right in the wheat—this explains to us how, and by whom, such darkening was effected. If he was formerly able from that great distance to bring about such a masterpiece of deceit and deviltry, as his image of the beast, how much more effectual and successful must his workings *now* be, being in direct contact with the religious sphere, nay, having made its most central locality his seat, and operating through his image of the beast, by making it to speak and causing it to act at his pleasure! History furnishes us

PROOFS OF SUCH DARKENING.—Here it ought to be remarked that the potency of this fourth trumpet, as the fulfillment of the three preceding, extends beyond the fifth and sixth trumpets, and hence has a very long time for its development, as the text indicates: "That the third part of them should be darkened," etc.

The darkening of the third part of the sun, the life-giving element of the Church, begins from this time to manifest itself very plainly:

1. From this time the Word of God was more and more driven into the background, and in its stead human doctrines were taught and honored. (To this also the existing Palimpsests point—those old manuscripts of the New Testament in which the holy text has been effaced, and religious human treatises written over it.)

2. From the writings of the men of these times. We

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<sup>1</sup> Matt. xiii, 43.

see how so many of them, in spite of their keen perception and heartfelt piety, were in many, and even essential, things extremely ignorant, concerning which the least in the kingdom of God ought to be clearly informed.

3. From this time there was not only no further progress made in Scriptural knowledge and true theology, but on the contrary a great retrogression began; for as is known, darkness began to set in mightily. Here was the beginning of those dark times called the Middle Ages, and the further we enter into them, the deeper grows the darkness. Through it was also a third part of the sunlight of the Church darkened.

4. As the Revelation does neither by any act or figure indicate that this darkening was ever really abolished and the original light restored, there is no reason why even to this day traces and actual specimens of this darkness may not still be seen and even remain to the end of this period.

*The darkening of the third part of the moon.*—The external organization of the Church of the New Covenant, as established by the Lord, is very simple. Her form of government is theocratic—republican. The *law of Christ* stands above all, and the Church is the highest court which has to decide according to this law in all cases. External ordinances are only two: baptism, and the Lord's-supper.

The darkening of this external part or moonlight of the Church of God is generally visible from the rise of a vast number of ceremonies, holidays, altars, images, etc., a jungle of weeds, on account of which the wheat in the secularized Church could hardly be seen. Moreover as the original theocratic Church government gave way to a hierarchy, or papacy, so did all these things gradually affect the believers, coloring and darkening finally even a third part of the real Church of God. For it is a well known fact that during the Middle Ages

even the acknowledged true Christian communities were not quite free from errors, but were more or less darkened. The degree in which also baptism and the Lord's-supper were disfigured and darkened, in their simple external form as well as in their object in which they ought to be used, is still seen to-day. The different practices of these two institutions of the Lord among the professors of religion is a clear evidence that all can not be right, but that certain alterations, and hence darkenings, of this moonlight exist, and surely to the extent of a third part. We shall not enter into the details of this subject, but leave the reader to settle for himself the manner of the darkening of the third part of the moon, and also to what extent this darkness still exists. As no sincere Christian will contradict the fact that the Lord, the apostles, and the first Christians had a uniform way of administering baptism and the Lord's-supper, which is the unchangeable pattern for us all in form and object, it is thus not hard to find the alteration of the third part, and hence also the darkening indicated in our text.

The darkening of the third part of the stars refers, as already remarked, to the special service and the light of those invisible beings, whom God ordered for the welfare of the Churches, and whom he holds in his right hand. The cause of this and the preceding darkenings can not be ascribed to the Lord, nor to the angels, but to the men who possessed not enough impartiality and love of truth to seek the truth and obey it unconditionally.<sup>1</sup>

SOME CONCLUSIONS CONCERNING THIS PROPHECY.—

1. It is wrong to maintain that from this time the whole Church of God was still in her pure and original condition.

2. It is wrong to consider any believer in Christ as

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<sup>1</sup>See note 19.

not belonging to the Church of God, because he may be darkened a third part in all the lights here mentioned, though such a darkening is no honor to any believer, but a defect and an injury.<sup>1</sup>

3. It is the duty of every believer to bring his creed to a strict test of the written Word of God. All human additions and mixtures ought to be considered as darkening parts of God's holy truth, and should be discarded.

ALL FOUR TRUMPETS TOGETHER.—While the first three trumpets belong together, and specify a Division by itself, still, according to the law of four, the four together form a whole, and this fourth trumpet brings us, therefore, to the close of a well planned series of operations against the Church of God. In this series the fourth trumpet is, in some degree, the highest stage or fulfillment of the preceding three. Of the two main things which the adversary had in view, viz., to bring forth darkness and death, he succeeded in one, so far as God could permit, and so far as the adversary was able—he effected the darkening of the third part of the whole light of the Church of God. For the other, for “death” he is preparing himself to come forth in the next (Fourth) Division of our Period, with the greatest powers possible.

The adversaries may, therefore, exult at their victory. They may flatter themselves that their ingenuity and deep-laid plan has so well succeeded that men hardly perceived the diabolical deceit. Their joy, however, shall be of short duration. The Lord is still the God of his people, and his enemies shall know it soon. He will defend his own cause and show that he is the Almighty. He will render recompense to his enemies. “According to their deeds will he repay, fury to his adversaries, recompense to his enemies.”<sup>2</sup> The woes and judgments now following may be fairly considered a warning, and threatening to those who consciously or unconsciously

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. iii, 12-15.

<sup>2</sup> Isa. lix, 18.

have acquiesced in those corruptions, that they may awake, and withdraw their hearts and hands from this work of darkness, and of Satan Number Three.

VERSE 13: "And I saw, and I heard an eagle, flying in mid heaven saying with a great voice, Woe, woe, woe, for them that dwell on the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, who are yet to sound."

Three woes are here announced, and each implies specific judgments of God for the chastisement of the men for the work consummated in the fourth trumpet, and as a counteraction against the too great success which the adversary might obtain in the religious sphere. "An eagle" shows us a heavenly being in the form of an eagle, as such a being also appears with three others as a bearer of the throne of God.<sup>1</sup> "Flying in mid heaven" signifies not standing and proclaiming it in one place, but in many places, and in such a light, "in mid heaven," that it may be heard in every direction. "By reason of the other voices of the trumpet:" the angels do not all sound alike, but each one seems to have his own time or peculiar way of sounding, so that from it the evil and terrible things may be apprehended.

#### FIFTH TRUMPET.

REV. ix, 1: "And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star from heaven fallen unto the earth."<sup>2</sup>

We now come to a figurative representation of an event which has long ago been justly explained by many expositors to signify the rise and spread of Mohammedanism. With this general signification thus stated beforehand, we are prepared to enter into the explanation of the figures here given.

John again sees a star, and reports its falling upon the earth, as if it had taken place during the sounding of this trumpet, or even before. The first movement in

<sup>1</sup> Rev. iv, 6-8.

<sup>2</sup> See note 20.

this work comes from heaven through an evil angel. This is what this star signifies. Here we have again the strange combination of the heavenly with the evil, and the falling of a star from heaven in connection with false prophecy. Mohammed claimed to be commissioned from heaven, and to have had a vision of it. He also pretended that the angel Gabriel appeared to him. We have no faith in these pretensions, but we do say that no intelligent impartial mind can read the description of his call, his revelations and visions of heaven, without becoming very strongly impressed that Mohammed's mind was under the influence of some powerful false religious spiritual agency. The earth, upon which this star fell, signifies the religious sphere.

"And there was given to him"—this star or angel—"the key of the pit of the abyss."

The abyss is the place of banishment of evil spirits.<sup>1</sup> The pit (*phrean*) signifies a well, or cistern, in John iv, 11, 12, where our Lord takes occasion to speak of the well or fountain of living waters, *i. e.*, the Gospel. To this the well of the abyss stands in fearful contrast, as is seen when it is opened by this angel, who received the key for that purpose.

VERSE 2: "And he opened the pit of the abyss; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace, and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit."

While the fountain of living water brings heavenly light and bliss, the well of the abyss belches forth darkness and woe. This is a very significant and most befitting figure of the rise and nature of Mohammedism. Its doctrines are compared to "smoke arising out of the pit of the abyss," and like that "of a great furnace"—*i. e.*, thick and heavy, hence darkening not only a third

<sup>1</sup> Luke viii, 31; Rev. xx, 3.

part of the sun, but the sun in general, and also the air, which means: the light of God in general and also the general (religious) atmosphere which men breathe, and in which they live. With this twofold mighty darkening ought further to be taken into account that the doctrines of this star or angel were not made by men, like those of the star or false prophet in the construction of his false system,<sup>1</sup> but they arose already made, out of the abyss as genuine darkness. Hence these doctrines come directly as the smoke from the burning fire of the bottomless deep, and as a judgment of God upon the men on earth, causing among them a darkness of a much severer nature than that of the fourth trumpet.

VERSE 3: "And out of the smoke came forth locusts upon the earth."

This reminds us of the plague in Egypt,<sup>2</sup> yet there is some difference. For those in Egypt were real locusts, coming into existence in a natural way; while those in our text are a kind of spiritual locusts, coming forth out of the smoke of the pit of the abyss, the prison of evil spirits. For out of the abyss shall in future come that spirit or demon, the eighth king in the beast;<sup>3</sup> hence closely considered, these locusts are nothing but a host of evil spirits coming out of the abyss upon the earth. They are the invisible instruments and inspirers through which Mohammedism has been brought into existence and carried on. In giving such an explanation to this figure, some one may be inclined to charge us with spiritualizing material and natural things, but in considering verse 11, he will find that we are not saying more than what the Revelation itself plainly indicates. There it says that this host of evil spirits had a king over them, the angel of the abyss whose name in Hebrew is Abaddon.

<sup>1</sup> Rev. xiii, 14.

<sup>2</sup> Rev. xvii, 8, 11.

<sup>3</sup> Rev. xvii, 8, 11.



Their general characteristics thus stated designate them: (1) As destroying beings. (2) Of great increase. (3) Uniting in vast armies. (4) Of quick motion. (5) Capable of irresistible extension over large fields and lands. All these characters mark in a most lucid manner the whole Mohammedan movement, as history testifies: "In the ten years of the administration of Omar [from 634-644] the Saracens reduced to his obedience 36,000 cities or castles, destroyed 4,000 churches or temples of the unbelievers, and dedicated 1,400 mosques for the exercise of the religion of Mohammed. One hundred years after his flight from Mecca, the arms and the reign of his successors extended from India to the Atlantic Ocean, over the various and distant provinces which may be comprised under the names of Persia, Syria, Egypt, Africa, and Spain."<sup>1</sup>

"And power was given them as the scorpions of the earth have power."

God permitted not only that they should do what was in accordance with his design, but he moreover endowed them with the necessary ability. This consisted in another animal characteristic which they possessed besides that of a locust—viz., the characteristic of a scorpion. What this is, is here not definitely stated, but is brought in with verse 10, and shows it to be the tail and poisonous sting of a scorpion, of which every body is afraid, and which therefore makes these locusts all the more dangerous.

VERSE 4: "And it was said unto them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree, but only the men who have not the seal of God on their foreheads."

Here we remark, first, that this prophecy has been

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<sup>1</sup> Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, by Harper & Bros., 329 Pearl st., N. Y., vol. v, p. 175.

literally fulfilled by the following order given by Abubeker in the year 632 to the armies of the Saracens: "Destroy no palm-tree, nor burn any field of corn; cut down no fruit-trees, nor do any mischief to cattle, only such as you kill to eat."<sup>1</sup> Secondly, this command must have a still more important signification, as it is found in the first trumpet<sup>2</sup> and in the sealing of the servants of God,<sup>3</sup> where it also speaks of green things, of grass and trees, figures which represent the believers, and also those indicated by the text who have the seal of God on their foreheads.

VERSE 5: "And it was given them that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months."

The Saracens did not kill professors of Christianity nor any believers in God who refused to become Mohammedans. They were only made slaves or compelled to pay tribute, and thus subjected to the Saracens. "The disciples of Abraham, of Moses, and of the Jews were solemnly invited to accept the more perfect revelation of Mohammed; but if they preferred the payment of a moderate tribute, they were entitled to the freedom of conscience and religious worship."<sup>4</sup> Of course, these terms were in case of free submission. If resistance was shown, and the submission effected by force of arms, the terms were different. Abubeker gave in the year 632 this order: "As you go on you will find some religious persons who live retired in monasteries, and propose to themselves to serve God in that way: let them alone, and neither kill them nor destroy their monasteries. And you will find another sort of people that belong to the synagogue of Satan, who have shaven crowns; be sure to cleave their skulls, and give them no quarter till they turn Mohammedans or pay tribute."<sup>5</sup> This state of

<sup>1</sup> Gibbon, p. 189.    <sup>2</sup> Rev. viii, 7.    <sup>3</sup> Rev. vii, 3.    <sup>4</sup> Gibbon, p. 264.    <sup>5</sup> Gibbon, p. 189.

things remained unabated from the year 623, Mohammed's first battle, to the year 774, the death of Calif Al-Mansur, when a decided change occurs, marked as such by historians. If we, then, according to the precedent of the Lord,<sup>1</sup> take a day for a year, the *five* months would make five times thirty—*i. e.*, *one hundred and fifty years*; and the end of the prophetical months would carry us to about one year before the death of Al-Mansur.

The historian, Dr. C. v. Rotteck, says:<sup>2</sup> "From Al-Mansur's death, as also from Abdor-Rhaman's dominion in Spain, the Arabian history assumes a thoroughly different character; hence the ascendancy of the Abassides and the division of the empire constitute here a natural resting-point." It ought also to be observed that about this time Charlemagne begins his career, snatching away a part of the Arabian dominion in Spain, and entering into peaceable relations and even mutual friendly intercourse with the Calif of the Orient, Haroun-al-Rashid.<sup>3</sup>

"And their torment is as the torment of a scorpion when he striketh a man."

The sting of a scorpion is not exactly fatal, but very painful, and causing dangerous symptoms. The torments here signified are those of the mind which is terrified at the approach of these hosts of locusts, armed with such weapons of torment. "The Saracens proposed the fair option of friendship, submission, or battle to the enemies of Mohammed; in other words, they had either to accept the Koran—*i. e.*, become Mohammedans, or pay a yearly tribute, or the sword. In a field of battle the forfeited lives of the prisoners were redeemed by the profession of Islam [*i. e.*, the religion of Mohammed]; the females were bound to embrace the religion of their masters."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Num. xiv, 34; Ezek. iv, 5, 6.    <sup>2</sup> Allgem. Weltgesch., book ii, p. 128.    <sup>3</sup> Rotteck, vol. ii., p. 183.    <sup>4</sup> Gibbon, pp. 129, 195, 246.

Such painful circumstances explain sufficiently the statement following:

VERSE 6: "And in those days men shall seek death, and shall in no wise find it; and they shall desire to die, and death fleeth from them."

Men of honest convictions and lovers of truth would justly prefer an easy death to submission to such a state of things. God, however, would not that these men should die, but that they should be chastised, repent, and live; hence much as they desired and sought death, the hand of God was visible in this, that death did not come, but fled from them.

VERSE 7: "And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared for war."

Beginning with this verse there follows now a closer description of the character of the Saracens, as it was formed in them through the influence of those evil spirits. Though they possessed in general the character and nature of locusts, they were not as weak as the locusts, and were frightful, "for their shapes were like unto horses prepared for war." Such a description, in the highest style of poesy, is given us by the Lord himself,<sup>1</sup> and its chief features are: strength, courage, swiftness; fearlessly, eagerly, and fiercely meeting the battle which it scents from afar, and not turning back from the sword. All these features are fully confirmed by the history of the Saracens. "Arabia, in the opinion of the naturalist, is the genuine and original country of the horse; the climate most propitious, not indeed to the size, but to the spirit and swiftness, of that noble animal."<sup>2</sup> "The charge of the Arabs was not like that of the Greeks and Romans, the effort of a firm and compact infantry: their military force was chiefly formed of cavalry and archers."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Job xxxix, 19-25.    <sup>2</sup> Gibbon, p. 78.    <sup>3</sup> Gibbon, p. 178

“And upon their heads as it were crowns like gold.”

These crowns do not only signify, as some have thought, the yellow silk turbans of the Saracens, but are a sign of their brilliant success and victories, as the Revelation everywhere uses this symbol in this sense. Thus their heads were adorned with, as it were, a golden sign of victory; and it is but just that one of their brightest and most prominent features should thus find adequate expression in prophecy.

“And their faces were as the faces of men.”

This does not so much signify the external appearance of the Saracens, but rather as the other figures, their inner character. By the preceding descriptions they have been presented to us as beings consisting of a combination of animal characteristics; but even though the animal characteristics predominated they were not entirely animal, they had also human features. Where do these appear? In the chief part of their being, in their heads. “They had faces as the faces of men.” In spite of all the animal features just mentioned, by which the Saracens appeared as fearful and inhuman beings, when looking squarely at them one could still see human features; in fact, “their faces were as the faces of men.” “Humanity” formed after all a chief feature of their being. This they proved, as seen above, by their conduct, and this is still further described in the following:

VERSE 8: “And they had hair as the hair of women.”

This again refers not only to the long hair of the Arabs, but also to that characteristic which adorns the weaker sex of humanity—woman. The hair of the woman is her glory or ornament. The Arabs thus possessed that which naturally, or as given by God, adorns woman, *i. e.*, they possessed even the characteristic of woman—mildness, tenderness in feeling, etc.—which is

especially manifest in the affections of mothers. Had the Saracens been entirely animal, they would have proved themselves everywhere as reckless destroyers; but because they possessed also human characteristics, and even those more tender ones of woman, we see the reason of their kind, moderate, and humane treatment of Christians, Jews, and of Heathen, who accepted their doctrine. The latter were admitted to all the temporal and spiritual benefits of Mohammed's primitive disciples.

"And their teeth were as [the teeth] of lions."

In order that the reader may not be misled to presume that the fearful characteristics of the Saracens are now terminating, all at once, in pleasantness and tenderness, the continuation of the description of the fearful features occurs here again, showing that the human, though existing, is obscured by the animal. Thus, the Saracens possessed moreover the characteristic of the lion. Their "teeth," or faculty of laying hold on, is compared to the teeth of lions. Lions are rapacious animals, noted for their courage and strength. Whatever they lay hold on with their teeth, may be considered hopelessly gone—a true picture of the manner in which the Saracens seized their prey.

VERSE 9: "And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron."

Iron is the strongest metal, and the symbol of strength.<sup>1</sup> This again signifies not the external wearing apparel of the Saracens, but that peculiar characteristic in which they, protected by an invisible power, appeared before their enemies as invulnerable. Such a protection is implied in the term: "And power was given them."<sup>2</sup> The breastplate of the Christian is the righteousness which Christ gives. So far as the Saracens were in the service of God for the execution of his judgment, could God give them certain protection.

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<sup>1</sup> Rev. xii, 5.      <sup>2</sup> Verse 5.

“And the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots, of many horses rushing to war.”

The Saracens, represented as horses with the ability and characteristics of locusts, fly into the battle, and their wings cause a great noise, so that it is compared to “the sounds of chariots of many horses rushing to war.” These chariots filled in olden times a place similar to the heavy artillery of modern times, hence, were a most powerful element of war. This figure gives to the onset of the Saracens an extremely fearful and warlike appearance, which must have terrified their enemies.

VERSE 10: “And they have tails like unto scorpions, and stings; and in their tails is their power to hurt men five months.”

In verse 3 it was stated that power was given them, as the scorpions of the earth have power. Now it also states where this power is located, viz., in their tails. What these signify is explained by the Scriptures in this way: “The ancient and honorable, he is the head; and the prophet that teaches lies, he is the tail.”<sup>1</sup> This explanation is of essential significance. In the kingdom of God, and wherever God’s order is found, there the prophet is the mediator between God and man, and is consequently the head; ancients and honorables come afterward. It was thus in the times of Moses, and is so in the dispensation of Christ. When a prophet becomes faithless, and teaches false things, he forfeits his high position and causes it to be occupied by another, while he himself sinks down to the lowest position, to the farthest end—to the tail.<sup>2</sup> The tail is, therefore, a figure of false prophetic action, or false religion, and the tails of scorpions, of these locust-horses with their stings, are the false religion of Mohammed, by which the men were troubled and tormented. In these “tails was the

<sup>1</sup> Isa. ix, 15.

<sup>2</sup> Deut. xxviii, 13, 44.

power to hurt men five months." This tenth verse expresses in full terms what the fifth verse only intimates. After the lapse of five prophetic months the conquests of the Saracens ceased, consequently also the further propagation of their doctrine and the injury caused by it.

VERSE 11: "They have over them as king the angel of the abyss: his name in Hebrew is Abaddon, and in the Greek [tongue] he hath the name Apollyon."

The Saracens had not only Mohammed and his successors in the Califate for leaders, but the whole movement, put in motion and carried out by evil spirits from the abyss, was directed by a *spirit-king*, by the angel of the abyss. His name signifies in Hebrew and Greek, destroyer, which is a correct designation of his work. It is first named in Hebrew, because most probably the Revelation was communicated in that language.

VERSE 12: "The first woe is past."

One of the great visitations of God with which he chastised those who allowed themselves in the two preceding trumpets to be led astray, is declared to be past. The reader can easily see how truly this visitation answers to the nature of the sin of those men. They had willingly undertaken the falsification of the Christian doctrines. They had obediently submitted themselves to that great star or angel, burning as a torch, and falling upon the third part of the rivers and the fountains of the waters. Yea, even believers were affected by his influence, and submitted to a darkening of a third part of their light, of the sun, of the moon, and of the stars. Because they thus were for darkness, the Lord lets them have it as a punishment—darkness directly arising out of the pit of the bottomless deep, which darkens the whole atmosphere, even the sun. He also lets them have a false religion, one that is not according to their own perverted notions and desires of their hearts, one at whose



sight they are struck with horror, and which is forced upon them with the edge of the sword. The rise and successful propagation of Mohammedism was, indeed, a woe to the inhabitants of the earth.

“Behold, there come yet two woes hereafter.”

This is not all which God had ordered for the chastisement of men, and especially for the secularized and darkened Church. True, it is a fearful woe, and ought to have driven men to repentance and sincere turning to God, but such fruit was not seen. For this reason the Lord comes with a greater woe, which begins soon after this Mohammedan devastation, and extends even to the day of the Lord,<sup>1</sup> hence, including all that which the Lord allows to happen during this long space of time. The third woe follows then quickly.<sup>2</sup>

THE PURPOSE OF THIS FIFTH TRUMPET is thus clearly set before our eyes. This judgment of God may by many be considered a dark problem and hard to solve, because through it Christianity was in many countries almost entirely exterminated; but if we rightly weigh the word of the Lord to the Church of Laodicea, “I would thou wert cold or hot!” this problem seems to some extent explainable. The Lord would rather have no Church in Laodicea than one which dishonors his name. This applies also to Christianity, as generally found in the time of Mohammed; therefore, it was more conducive to the glory of God to exterminate it than to let it stand.

#### SIXTH TRUMPET.

VERSES 13, 14: “And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the horns of the golden altar which is before God, one saying to the sixth angel, which had the trumpet: Loose the four angels, which are bound at the great river Euphrates.”

<sup>1</sup> Rev. ix, 14.

<sup>2</sup> Rev. ix, 15-18.

Observe the place from which this command came: from the horns, *i. e.*, from the upper part of the altar, from which in the fifth seal came the voices of the souls of the martyrs.<sup>1</sup> From the golden altar, from which at other times only prayers were ascending to God, mediated by the heavenly High-priest, comes the command to let loose the four angels of destruction bound at the great river Euphrates. This command, then, must come from God or Christ. A river signifies, as we have seen, a people, and a great river, a great people. The river of a country is a fit symbol to represent the inhabitants of that country. Consequently we would here, from this symbol, have to understand the Turks, for the Euphrates is the chief river of this country, flowing through it from its rise to its estuary in the sea.

This is used in the Old Testament as a symbol to represent the Assyrians at the time when they possessed that country. Certainly in the time in which we live, and since the power of the Saracens was broken, it can properly be applied to no other nation than to the Turks.

VERSE 15: "And the four angels were loosed, which had been prepared for the hour and day and month and year, that they should kill the third part of men."

From this it would appear, as if they were waiting for the time at which they should be loosed, for they were prepared for their work of destruction, and being let loose, they begin it, each at the time appointed by God, at the hour, day, month, and year—four different divisions of time. The beginning and end of their time of activity is fixed beforehand, as also the extent of their destruction: "that they should kill the third part of men." This comprises probably the third part of the world then known. How four angels are able to execute such a work is further stated:

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<sup>1</sup> Rev. vi, 10.

VERSE 16: "And the number of the armies of the horsemen was twice ten thousand times ten thousand: I heard the number of them."

Hence, this is not a conjectural estimate, for John heard their number stated with certainty. Thus we have here an army of two hundred million warriors on horseback. What a number, set in motion under the direction of four chief angels! Well may there be some great destruction expected, for this number equally divided would give fifty million warriors to each of the four chiefs. From this, then, we may perceive that this immense army is thoroughly organized, not only in four great divisions, but in numerous smaller ones for the easy and effective performance of their great task.

VERSE 17: "And thus I saw the horses in the vision and them that sat on them, having breastplates as of fire, and of hyacinth, and of brimstone."

This is all John has to say of these riders. In the preceding trumpet there were no riders at all, but only locust-horses. These were the destroyers. Here, however, are horses and riders, hence, instruments of destruction standing under a corresponding agency, directly connected with and governed by it. These riders are without weapons, yet clad with a breastplate, whose appearance shows a perfect harmony with those elements which in this trumpet are the means of destruction. There being, then, horses and riders here the instruments of destruction consist of double the strength of those in the fifth trumpet. Of these horses it is further said:

"And the heads of the horses [are] as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths proceedeth fire and smoke and brimstone."

The locust-horses had only the teeth of lions; but these of our text have the heads of lions. The strength and the terror of the lion appear here in a much higher

degree. Yea, there is more than mere animal power of destruction, for fire, smoke, and brimstone come not from animals, but from the abyss. It is not necessary to show that the chief instruments, which effect this judgment of God, are also of the abyss, for it is not only a judgment equal to the preceding one, but even excelling this greatly in vehemence, thus plainly indicating what kind of powers must be at work here. The fire, smoke, and brimstone, proceeding out of the mouth of these lion-horses, also show from whence these elements come, and of what nature such instruments must be, if they are able to stream forth such means of destruction. We have seen before fire as a figure of destruction, and smoke as a figure of darkening. Brimstone is suffocating, and is a figure of destruction of the sorest kind, as is seen in Sodom and Gomorrah, and from other testimony of the Scriptures.<sup>1</sup>

VERSE 18: "By these three plagues was the third part of men killed, by the fire and the smoke and the brimstone, which proceeded out of their mouths."

Though these instruments are introduced as armies of warriors, and the killing of so many men was mostly done by war, yet this war is of such a nature that it may also justly be compared to a destruction by fire, smoke, and brimstone.

VERSE 19: "For the power of the horses is in their mouths, and in their tails: for their tails are like unto serpents, and have heads; and with them do they hurt."

The hurt by the tails is mentioned last of all hurts, as if it had not been caused from the beginning. This is also proved by the history of the Turks, for they accepted the religion of Mohammed only in later times, effecting also through it the destruction mentioned; hence,

<sup>1</sup> Dent. xxix, 23; Job. xviii, 15; Ps. xi, 6; Isa. xxx, 33; Ezek. xxxviii, 22; Rev. xiv, 10.

their tails must have had heads, in order to stream forth out of their mouths the destroying elements. Thus is further to be understood by these tails which were like serpents with heads, the characteristic of the Devil and Satan.

The riders themselves seem to do nothing in this destruction but direct their lion-horses. This has the advantage of applying these powers of destruction more to the purpose and with greater effect than if every thing were left to the inclination of these horses.

WHAT ARE THESE HORSES THEMSELVES?—First, in regard to their external appearance, their composition of different animal forms signifies so many inherent characteristics as were necessary for the execution of their work. The external form of all the creatures on earth corresponds with their inner beings, which is, so to say, expressed thereby. Such was the case with man in his original state as the image of God, and that it is otherwise now is the result of sin. If thus the inner character of certain men should express itself in corresponding external forms, they would externally be similar to such unnatural and monstrous beings as the horses of our text. Viewed from this position the latter are really nothing extraordinary, for if we could see into the inner part of man we would often discover similar formations.

Secondly, in regard to their personality, are they men or angels? The Revelation designates their four leaders as “angels,” and what else can their armies be, considered in the light of all the circumstances, than angels, whom the Lord uses as a means of destruction, letting them loose upon the men on earth to chastise them?

As a similar army of such evil angels, under the leadership of one angel—from the abyss—inspired the Saracens, and made them executioners of God’s judgments, so was this army of two hundred million angels,

under the leadership of four, the invisible power which inspired and animated the Turks in their devastations.

REMARK.—In a time like ours, where not a small number of professors of Christianity are strongly inclined toward materialism, an explanation like the one just given may appear to many as too spiritual, but either there are spirits, or there are none. Either they exist in such numbers that the Scripture calls them “principalities and powers,” with Satan as their chief leader,<sup>1</sup> or what the Scripture says is untrue and of no account. We hold that it is wiser to stand on the side of Scripture than to be opposed to it. When men suppose themselves wiser than God they err greatly. Consider, then, in the explanation of these lion-horses that also the seven-headed beast in its unnatural composition signifies a spirit. The dragon with his seven heads and ten horns, etc., signifies a spirit. Likewise the second beast,<sup>2</sup> a lamb with two horns, but speaking like a dragon, signifies a spirit. If now the three chief leaders of evil spirits are represented by such compositions of different animal characteristics, why should it appear improbable and erroneous that other and subordinate spirits be likewise represented by compositions of different animal characters, as, for instance, those in the fifth and sixth trumpets?

THE GREATNESS OF THE JUDGMENT OF THIS TRUMPET.—This surpasses in awfulness the judgment of the fifth trumpet. In that there were with all the terrible characteristics some human features to be seen, yea, prominent ones, but here every thing is animal, and even a composition of the most dreadful sort: of the war-horse, of the lion, and of the serpent. To this are added the elements issuing out of their mouths signifying the fierce wrath of God: fire, smoke, and brimstone.

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<sup>1</sup>Eph. vi, 12; Col. ii, 15; Rev. xii, 7-9.   <sup>2</sup>Rev. xiii, 11-18.

They are also double beings, not simply horses, but riders on them, and judging from the number of their leaders and other indications, there must have been a much greater army than in the fifth trumpet. Again, as it was there only to torment men five months, it is here to kill the third part of men by these three plagues.

#### ITS BEARINGS UPON HISTORY.

The four angels let loose may safely be considered as the chief leaders of this army of two hundred million spirits. That many demons at the same time may possess and exercise power over a single person, and that such a number of demons are standing under a certain leader, is proved by that demon who, in the name of a whole legion, gave answer to the Lord.<sup>1</sup> It is not improbable that the four leaders of this immense army of horsemen were regulated according to the law of four.

It is possible that these four angels signify also four chief divisions of Turks, through which they operated. Of this nation, which arises in history as such a destroyer, K. v. Rotteck writes thus:<sup>2</sup> "Through many centuries, and up to the modern time, the name Turk struck terror to the hearts of the people. There are *three* entirely different kingdoms which present themselves to us under this name. (1) An old one, which appears in the sixth century of our era, but disappears again even before the time of Charlemagne. (2) Then the polynomial kingdoms of the Turks which formed themselves during the period of the Arabic Califate from this latter's fragments. (3) The Osmanic-Turkish kingdom, whose origin is found in the following period." This would consequently make two well known Turkish kingdoms whose existence comes within the time marked by our text.

<sup>1</sup> Mark v, 9, 10.  
vol. ii, pp. 286, 287.

<sup>2</sup> Allgem. Weltgesch., Stuttgart, 1846,

Between these two there comes, according to Rotteck's own testimony, a third kingdom—viz., that of the Moguls, of which he says that they were a Turkish horde, or a horde in subjection to the Turks.<sup>1</sup> Preceding all these, and immediately following the devastation of the Saracens, are the well-known Magiars appearing as the first division or kingdom of the Turks. True, Rotteck confesses that he is not perfectly clear in regard to their descent, yet maintains as not improbable that many of the peoples of the desert which came over into Europe were the remnants of that first old Turkish kingdom of the sixth century.<sup>2</sup> Gibbon, however, declares decidedly, as we presently shall see, that the Magiars were Turks. So does Chambers' *Encyclopædia*.<sup>3</sup> We shall find this statement corroborated by the position which this people occupied in the history of this time as a chastiser of nations. The four divisions of Turks would consequently be:

I. THE MAGIARS, from about the year 888.

II. That kingdom formed out of various tribes of Turks and becoming especially great and powerful under THE DYNASTY OF THE SELJUKS, from about the year 1000.

III. THE MOGULS, appearing under Temugin (Zingis Khan), 1206.

IV. THE OSMAN-TURKS, yet in power since the year 1300.

We will now give a short history of each of these divisions.

I. THE MAGIARS.—Of these Gibbon says:<sup>4</sup> “When the black swarm of Hungarians first hung over Europe, about nine hundred years after the Christian era, they were mistaken by fear and superstition for the Gog and

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<sup>1</sup> Rotteck, vol. v, p. 161.    <sup>2</sup> Rotteck, vol. ii, p. 287.  
<sup>3</sup> Chambers's *Ency.*, New York, Am. Book Exchange, Art., Hungary.    <sup>4</sup> Gibbon, vol. v, pp. 410, 411.



Magog of the Scriptures, the signs and forerunners of the end of the world. Magiar is the national and Oriental denomination of the Hungarians; but among the tribes of Scythia they are distinguished by the Greeks under the proper and peculiar name of Turks, as the descendants of that mighty people who had conquered and reigned from China to the Volga." "After some experience of the Roman tactics, they adopted the use of the sword and spear, the helmet of the soldier, and the iron breastplate of his steed. From their earliest infancy their children and servants were exercised in the double science of archery and horsemanship. In the abuse of victory they astonished Europe, yet smarting from the wounds of the Saracens and the Danes. Mercy they rarely asked, and more rarely bestowed. Both sexes were accused as equally inaccessible to pity. . . . The deliverance of Germany and Christendom was achieved by the Saxon princes Henry the Fowler and Otho the Great. . . . But at the end of twenty years, the children of the Turks who had fallen by his sword invaded the empire of his son; their forces are defined, at the lowest estimate, at one hundred thousand horse."<sup>1</sup> Rotteck says:<sup>2</sup> "The manners of the Magiars recalled to mind the barbarity of the Huns. Wherever their armies penetrated, the country was laid waste; and though the report of their contemporaries that they ate the flesh of the killed and drank their blood may be more the expression of terror than real truth, yet even this terror is full of signification. The very first year after the death of Arnulf, the Hungarian hordes of robbers flooded Austria, Carinthia, Bavaria. The flames of villages and convents marked their way. Heavily loaded with spoil, they returned home. After having, during the interval from 903 to 906, laid waste Upper Italy and despoiled Moravia, they repeated the attack upon Ger-

<sup>1</sup> Gibbon, vol. v, 415-418.<sup>2</sup> Rotteck, vol. ii, pp. 201, 202.

many, which was governed by the child Ludwig (907). The German army, gathered in the newly erected fortification at the mouth of the Ens, was beaten. The commander-in-chief, Luitpold, duke of Bavaria, fell after a desperate conflict, and with him a great number of bishops, abbots, and counts. The king himself, while bringing help was beaten, and narrowly escaped. Far and near were churches and habitations of men ablaze or tumbling into ruin. Sword, hunger, and misery devoured the German nation. Saxony, Thuringia, Franconia, Suabia, yea, Loraine, felt the rod. The minds were struck with horror. Nobody ventured to fight these fiends longer; hence it was in vain that capital punishment was announced by Ludwig for the gathering of the *arriere-ban*, and an ignominious tribute remained the only means to obtain, not peace, but an unsafe stand-still. Under the reign of Conrad I, the devastation was similar to the former. It was renewed under Henry I, when he refused the tribute which his predecessors had promised. Southern Germany up to the Rhine, also the Lotharingian countries, then Hussia, Thuringia, and Saxony, were despoiled and devastated by these barbarians, and the king forced to consent to a nine years' tribute. Italy and France also suffered from the rapacious expeditions of the Hungarians until the middle of the tenth century. Eastward their terror extended to the neighborhood of Constantinople."

II. That kingdom formed out of various tribes of Turks, and becoming especially great and powerful under THE DYNASTY OF THE SELJUKS. After Rotteck has reported how this old Turkish kingdom existed in the sixth century and then again disappeared, he continues: "Meanwhile the name of the Turks lived on, in the countries of the desert of Middle Asia. When the victorious Arabs, after the destruction of the Persian kingdom, entered the countries of the Oxus and Jaxartes,

they met Turkish hordes, and were brought with them into manifold relations of war and peace. The Califs (the successors to the throne of Mohammed) formed out of Turkish prisoners of war, or of such as accepted their services, separate corps, especially body-guards, and prepared for themselves therewith peril and disgrace, [but] to the Turks elevation and power. While the Calif even in Bagdad trembled at the temper and haughtiness of his body-guards, [other] Turkish favorites, or also common adventurers, slaves of the Turkish race, who were sent out into the provinces as governors, erected for themselves independent thrones, under similar circumstances with similar success as the native usurpers; however, forming themselves into a national compact of their own, having the same origin and the same character.”<sup>1</sup> (The division of Turks which is here described is the rising of various Turkish tribes from their low and servile condition to that of an independent nation, lifting themselves up as rulers over their own masters—the Saracens or Arabs.)

Among those who thus distinguished themselves and deserve special mention are, Achmed, who raised himself to an independent ruler in Egypt; after him, in the same country, another Turkish slave, Mohammed Ykshid; again, Mahmud, who established the dominion of the Gaznevites in the year 999. He, the son of a domestic slave of the vizier of a Samanide ruler, arose from the position of a governor in Gazna, which his father had already obtained, to that of independent ruler of Chorasman, and of all the countries from the Caspian Sea to the mouth of the Indus, from the Jaxartes to the proximity of the Tigris. The indefatigable “Sultan” undertook twelve expeditions into Hindostan, and into the regions of the Ganges, crushing and treading down many peoples, demolishing many pagodas, and conquering the

<sup>1</sup> Rotteck, vol. ii, pp. 287-290.

greatest part of the peninsula. Yet he himself trembled before the power of the Turkomans—nomadic hordes of Turkish descent—which were roving around on this side of the Jaxartes. His successor, Sultan Massoud, saw the fulfillment of the foreboding of his predecessor on the bloody day of battle at Zendecan (1038), which ended the dominion of the Gaznevites in these northern regions.

It was Trogul-Beg, the grandson of Seljuk, who thus conquered Massoud. Not only the Gaznevites, but also the Bowides succumbed to the arm of Trogul, and the greatest part of Persia obeyed his word. The Calif, Kajem, himself had called him [for assistance] against his oppressors. As Emir al Omrah, the Seljuke, now ruled also over Bagdad. His authority induced all the hordes that were with him to accept the Islam (the religion of Mohammed), which strengthened his dominion so that the terror of the Turkomans extended as far as Constantinople.

Trogul's nephew and successor, Alp Arslan (1036) (the courageous lion), conquered and captured the Byzantine Emperor, Romanus Diogenes. His son, Malek-Sha, was the greatest among the Seljukish princes. He united more countries under his scepter than the Calif ever possessed. After him his empire was divided. A bloody contest arose between the sons and the brother of the dead concerning the inheritance. Ninety years after this division the main kingdom was destroyed by the Chowaesmites (1195), whose founder was Kotheddin Mohammed, a Seljukish governor, but who had made himself independent. The dominion of this new dynasty extended its boundaries rapidly. The Ghurides were overthrown by it. The fragments of the Chowaesmic hordes fled to Western Asia, overflowing Palestine, and by selling their services strengthened the power of the neighboring Seljukish princes. For in the provinces of Asia Minor, the dominion of the Seljuks was still existing. Of

those mentioned above, after the downfall of the rest, Iconium, or Roud, was for a longer time still maintaining its existence. The founder, Suleiman Gazi (protector of the faith), had become great by the dissension of the candidates to the Byzantine throne, Nicephorus Biennius, and Nicephorus Botoniates. His assistance helped the latter to the crown, but Asia Minor was the reward of such assistance. The throne of this Seljukish Roman Empire was first set up in Iconium, afterward in Nicea, the terror of Constantinople, and the abomination of the occident. It was the crusaders, who, before all others, fought most vehemently against the power of this Turkish Empire. It outlived such assault, however, and was finally destroyed by the Moguls.

Among the Seljukish governors there were especially the Atabeks in Syria, who became mighty and independent. Their founder was Emdad Eddin Zanghi (1121), governor in Mossul, a valiant and wise prince, after whose assassination his son, Nureddin Mahmud, built in Aleppo the throne to a far extending dominion alike formidable to the Fatimites and the Christians. Again, the kingdoms of the Ortokides and Ayubites may be counted among the Turkish kingdoms. Ortok, the leader of a Turkoman horde, received from the Seljuks the hereditary dominion over Jerusalem and Palestine (1084), but the sons of Ortok lost the Holy Land in the days of the first crusade against the Fatimites in Egypt (1096).<sup>1</sup>

THE CRUSADES.—As repeatedly intimated, it was especially the crusaders who came in conflict with the Seljukish Turks. The crusades, too, belong to the events of the sixth trumpet: a war of many nations, a united undertaking of many peoples, or of a whole grand division,<sup>2</sup> where millions of combatants<sup>3</sup> throng

<sup>1</sup> Rotteck, Vol. II, p. 287-290.    <sup>2</sup> P. 295.    <sup>3</sup> P. 300; see also note 21.

the awful scene which is represented in our text as the great river Euphrates, with its most terrible armies of destruction. Surely this must appear to us a weighty fact of no small signification.

III. THE MOGULS.—This division of Turks is thus described by Rotteck: "The Moguls, whose destroying dominion comprised almost the whole of Asia and a third part of Europe, are a Turkish horde, or a horde subject to the Turks. In the thirteenth century there came forth from the desert of Cobi the most terrible storm that ever devastated the world. Under Zingis Khan and his sons there came rushing upon the countries like an avalanche the half-human Moguls, casting down a hundred thrones, and erecting over their ruins their own immense empire—the greatest, through blood and desolation, the most terrible in history."<sup>1</sup>

Temugin, the son of a Mogul Khan, named Yesu-Kai, was, on account of his youth, at first despised as a ruler by his people, but in spite of this he succeeded by liberality and valiant deeds, so that at a Kurultai, or imperial diet, in the year 1206, it could be proclaimed by a prophet that Temugin be by the decree of heaven Zingis Khan (the greatest khan or prince) and appointed ruler over the earth. The hordes of the wide deserts acknowledged faithfully the word of the prophet, and at their head there soon appeared the powerful Zingis, the terror of the nations. He rushed over the great wall with the myriads of his warriors into China, mowing down the Chinese armies, conquering Yanking, the capital, and forcing heavy tribute and the ceding of five provinces.

Soon after war was declared against Mohammed, the Sultan of the far extending dominion of Chowaresm (1218–1224). Seven hundred thousand Moguls met in the plains north of the Jaxartes with four hundred

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<sup>1</sup> Rotteck, Vol. II, p. 160.

thousand Chowaresmic warriors, and beat them in a dreadful battle. Zingis, now with the aid of Chinese military engineers, broke down the walls of the renowned cities of Otrar, Meru, Nisabur, Herat, Balk, Kandahar, and others. The trembling nations were crushed, the monuments of industry of former generations were destroyed. Through all the countries from the Caspian Sea to the Indus the devastation was raging, against which Gelaleddin, Mohammed's son, had in vain set the power of his heroism. The murderer of the nations died soon after, while devising new plans of conquests (1227).

His successors put them into operation with the same success and the same barbarity. The history of the conquests of the Moguls is horrible. The traces of their rage for destruction are to-day, after nearly six hundred years, not wiped out. With immense armies of war, insatiable and without pity, they rushed through the flourishing countries and left everywhere deserts behind them. Any city that fell into their power was plundered, destroyed, its inhabitants partly killed, partly sold as slaves. Neither age, standing, nor sex found mercy before these barbarians—even submission softened not their fury. When Octai-Khan had conquered North China the proposition was made in the council of his magnates to exterminate the entire population of this extensive and populous country, that there be a free pasture for the flocks of the conquerors. The eloquent representations of Ilid-schudsai, a noble mandarin, whom Octai honored, scarcely saved the severely threatened people. Through the successful weapons of Octai and his nephews there was subjected at the same time with North China, in the west all the countries from the Ural to the Oder and to the Baltic, from the frozen ocean to the Adriatic. Immediately after this he sent out Batu with five hundred thousand warriors. In less than six years this man

passed, in an unprecedented course of victories through ninety degrees longitude—the fourth part of the circumference of the earth. Kublai-Khan prepared war against the Song, and led his invincible hosts from city to city, from province to province, unto the residence Quinsay (1279), finally unto Canton. The Chinese avoiding the conflict in the field, suffered death firmly behind their walls and fortifications. Bleeding, they finally cast themselves at the feet of the conqueror. All China now obeyed the conqueror, who, not yet satiated, subjugated as tributary countries Corea, Tunkin, Cochin China, Pegu, even Bengal, and Thibet; yea, visiting the far island of the Indian Ocean, but being in an attack upon Japan twice impressively reminded of the limits of his power by the impetuosity of the waves.<sup>1</sup>

In connection with these general historical intimations may be mentioned the overthrow of the Califate, and the dominion of the Saracens. “Hulagu, the grandson of Zingis-Khan, led his wild hosts against Bagdad, the holy city (1258). He conquered it, plundered it for forty days, killed two hundred thousand persons, among them Mostasem Billah, the fifty-sixth of the successors of the prophet. Horses crushed his corpse by treading on it. Thus perished the dominion of the Abbassides.”<sup>2</sup>

The immense empire of the Moguls itself underwent in later years a division into four parts, and soon separated into greater and smaller fragments. However, it was again renewed by

#### TIMOUR, ALSO CALLED TAMERLANE.

Then arose in the finest province of Zagatai the emir of Kesh, Timour, a relative of the house of Zingis, and resembling this conqueror in character and experience. From the twelfth year of his age danger called him into the field of battle. Beaten, proscribed, separated from

<sup>1</sup> Rotteck, Vol. II, p. 292-295.      <sup>2</sup> P. 283.



all his friends, he escaped almost miraculously from persecution, and obtained by the most glorious turn of fortune the dominion over the whole of Zagatai. Emir Hussein, at that time first Nevian of the Khan Adel and brother-in-law to Timur, was killed by the latter, and at a Kurultai the dominion of the conqueror was solemnly proclaimed (1370). To the house of Zagatai the title *Khan* was still left, but without power. Sojergatmish, and after him Mahmud, were installed by Timour as the bearers of his highest dignity, but himself he called Sahib Keran, lord of the world.

TAMERLANE AND HIS EMPIRE.—For thirty and four years, reckoned from that exaltation, did Timour reign beneficent and friendly to his own country and relative tribes, but terrible to the foreigners. The history of his wars abounds in more horrors than that of Zingis and Attila. War was the business of his life. At first the neighboring countries Chowaresm, Kandahar, and Kashgar were conquered; then the torrent of war ran over the countries of Iran. The kingdoms of Shirwan, Fars, Bagdad (where the house of Il-khan had built a splendid throne), and many others, fell; from the gulf of Persia to the Caucasian heights the word of Timour had sway.

The desert-lands of Middle and North Asia heard it with trembling. The hordes of the conqueror penetrated the wide regions of Turkestan beyond the Irtish; Siberia did not resist, but in the north-west the Khan of Kipzak, by the favor of Timour came to dominion, and afterward the ungrateful aggressor suffered the well deserved punishment awarded to perjurers. Even into Russian countries did the conqueror advance. The banks of the Volga, of the Tanais, the shores of the Euxine echoed with shouts of victory from the hordes of Timour; but the most brilliant conquest was that of wealthy Hindostan. Passing over the high mountains of the frontier, Timour descended boldly into the North-Indian countries, follow-

ing then, by turning eastward, the path of the great Alexander, but penetrating farther than the Macedonian hero, over the Hyphasis into the region of the Ganges, conquering the strong Delhi (1398), then turning back to his home with heavy spoils. Here he received several princes of the Orient whom Bajazet, the Osmanic sultan, had driven from their states; also messengers of the Greek emperor and of other Christian princes. They all implored Timour's help against the formidable oppressor. Thus Timour marched westward with an immense force, crushing, as a prelude to the great war, the rebellious Georgians, then the peoples of Syria, burning the cities of Haleb and the rich Damascus, to whose aid the Mamlukes of Egypt had come, and erecting on the ruins of the conflagrations horrible monuments of victory, high towers of heads of men. Finally after two years' negotiation with the sultan, both led their armies into battle near Ancyra in Galatia; four hundred thousand Turks and eight hundred thousand Moguls, as the most moderate reports say (1402).<sup>1</sup> After a murderous conflict, Timour was victorious. Bajazet was caught and shut up in an iron cage, on whose bars he despondingly smashed his head. Europe and Africa trembled at such news; but the Turkish and Mamlukish sultans, as also the Greek emperor, conjured by petitions and tribute the threatening storm, and Timour turned his steps slowly toward Samarcand, where he celebrated his victories by magnificent ovations (1404). Yet the insatiable had already from Syria directed a longing look toward China. From there he was informed of domestic disturbances in that empire, and upon this he had based the hope of restoring the dominion of the Moguls, which, since 1368, had been overthrown. That same Winter did Timour hasten over the ice of the rivers, through the snow of the deserts toward his distant goal; but the

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<sup>1</sup> Rotteck, vol. ii, pp. 431-433 (425).

world-conqueror of seventy years died of a fever near Otrar (March 19, 1405).

THE MOST ABIDING EFFECT OF THE WARS OF TIMOUR is that the doctrine of Mohammed was in Asia generally strengthened, yea, mightily propagated. He brought many tribes of the Tartars and Moguls to the worship of the one God and his prophet. In India he laid the foundations for the brightest conquests of the Islam. The hopes of the Christians in regard to the conversion of the Moguls, and what they had here and there already sowed or built up in Asia, were mostly frustrated through him.<sup>1</sup>

That the Mohammedan religion was thus very much promoted through Timour, is an illustration and confirmation of the remark previously made on the text, that the workings of the lion-horses with their tails was not indicated from the beginning, but only at the last. The first division of Turks, the Magiars, were heathen. The second division of Turks, under the Seljuks, accepted the Mohammedan religion only in later years. Likewise the third division of Turks, the Moguls under Zingis Khan, were heathen, and not until the reign of Timour did they accept the doctrine of the false prophet, which is represented by the Scripture as the tail, and as doing hurt.

The empire of the Moguls reached under Timour its highest importance, though his successors continued the wars of conquests, and the Timouride Babur laid in India the foundation of the long existing glorious empire of the great Mogul.

IV. THE OSMAN TURKS YET IN POWER.—“These have their name from Osman or Othman, an emir who, after the Seljukish power in Asia Minor was destroyed, rendered himself famous by valiant deeds, and laid the foundation for the renewal of Turkish grandeur. How-

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<sup>1</sup> Rotteck, vol. ii, pp. 431-433.

ever, whether he or his horde was home-born or foreign has only been the occasion, not the fundamental reason, of the renewed Turkish power. The fragments of that same Seljukish Kingdom which during two centuries had fought so terribly against the Byzantine emperors and the Crusaders of the Occident, but succumbed to the storm of the Moguls, needed but a fresh animus to be terrible again. This re-animation, this impulse, went out from the horde of Osman. It rushed down from the mountains of the Old Trojan country into the fields of Bithynia, and took away from the declining Byzantine Empire a great part of this precious province. Prusa became the residence of the ruling power. From near and far the Moslems were flocking to the zealot of the Mohammedan faith (about 1300).

“Orchan, the son of Osman, continued the conquests successfully. Nicea, Nicomedia, were won, and many countries of Asia Minor united under his scepter. The Greek Empire, disturbed by civil war, was not able to resist. Orchan, to whom Emperor John VI Cantacuzene gave his own daughter, Theodora, in marriage, asked for her a suitable hereditary portion. Suleiman, his son, crossed the Hellespont, taking Gallipoli, which was destroyed by an earthquake, rebuilding it stronger than it was before, and thus being the first to set foot upon European ground (1375).

“Orchan was succeeded by his son, Murat I Gasi (1360). He advanced in spite of all opposition into the Greek Empire, conquered the fortified and beautiful [city of] Adrianople, also Philippople, Thracia, and Macedonia, and passed through or terrified all the countries from the Danube to the Adriatic coast. The strong youths who, by the fate of battles, became prisoners of the sultan were gathered into corps, which, filled with the fiery zeal of proselytes, and regulated by excellent military discipline, became the instrument of the most brilliant victories.

Already Orchan had the captive children of Christians educated as soldiers for himself. Murat gave them a well calculated organization, and consecrated the new corps (Jan-Itshier, Janizary) with pomp to his service. For two hundred years the Janizaries, as excellent infantry, were generally victorious, and remained even in their decline the flower of the Turkish armies. The terror which emanated from them was, however, a co-operating cause of the gradual increase of standing troops in the Christian kingdoms. Murat established his despotic seat, radiant with pomp, in Adrianople, directing therefrom his daily enlarging kingdom. His last victory was at Kossowa (1389), where he decidedly trod down the Servians, but where, in the very moment of victory, he fell by the arm of a Servian youth.

“Still greater terrors emanated from Bajazet Ilderim (the lightning), who succeeded Murat. The conquests on the south of the Danube were continued, and on the north of this river begun, while also in Asia Minor the authority of Osman was strengthened. Against this terrible warrior were gathered, under the flag of Sigismund, king of Hungary, the armies of the Occident for a severe battle. A hundred thousand well armed warriors marched out of Buda. At Nicopolis they met Bajazet’s force, which, equal in courage, but more than double in number, threatened to surround them with the horns of their extensive crescent. The impetuosity of the French opened the battle prematurely and brought destruction upon the army of the Christians, and many thousands of the latter fell upon the field of battle. Among the nobility the prince of Burgundy, the count of Artois, Couzi, Bouzicault were prisoners. Sigismund escaped with difficulty, in roundabout ways, to his kingdom.”<sup>1</sup> How Bajazet in his mighty course of conquest was beaten by Timour, we have stated above.

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<sup>1</sup> Rotteck, vol. ii, pp. 423-425.

It is certainly not necessary to describe further the character of the Osmanic Turks. What has just been said characterizes their whole history, and it will, in connection with what is generally known of their history in the last decennaries and earlier times, convince every unprejudiced reader that the Turks of this division are genuine relations in spirit and character to the three preceding divisions. Meanwhile it ought to be remarked how, after the Califate in Bagdad was overthrown, it still existed among the Tshercassic and Baharitic Mam-lukes. Sultan Selim I (1512) carried the Calif Mota-wakkel as prisoner to Constantinople, and appropriated the latter's dignity to himself. From that time the Osmanic sultans were also acknowledged by the Sunnites as califs.<sup>1</sup> Hence this kingdom or division of the Turks is clearly presented to us as doing injury with the tail of false prophetic agitations. It is not without signification that *horse-tails* are to this day the standards of Turkish commanders. The sultan, for instance, has seven horse-tails carried before him, the grand vizier five, and the pashas three, two, one. Thus have these four divisions of Turks been in fact a great and fearfully devastating river of men.

WHAT MIGHT FURTHER BE INCLUDED WITH THESE THREE PLAGUES.—Spirits are here mentioned as being instrumental in bringing forth three kinds of plagues, by which the third part of mankind was killed. It is, therefore, evident that all this was not accomplished simply by war, which is represented by fire, nor by war and smoke, together with the darkening doctrine of Mohammed, for brimstone is certainly to be considered as a special plague and a special means in the killing of these men. As in this Division of our Period the black plague, called the black death, was raging, by which within three years, from 1348 to 1350, about

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<sup>1</sup> Rotteck, vol. ii, p. 431.

twenty-five million men died,<sup>1</sup> it might be possible that this means had also emanated from these evil spirits for the killing of the third part of men. This, as a whole, is the fulfillment of the terrible figures of this trumpet.

#### THE FOURTH, FIFTH, AND SIXTH TRUMPETS VIEWED TOGETHER.

We have considered the figures of each of these trumpets separately; let us now see how together they form a unit, and thus represent the Third Division of our Period, as shown by the third rider. He appeared upon a black horse, with a balance in his hand, while a voice in the midst of the four living creatures said: "A measure of wheat," etc. The signification is: Introduction of darkness, reduction of the light and Word of God, directly and indirectly, yet so that the true inner life of the Holy Spirit is not hurt. Now, how this general description agrees with the three trumpets just considered, will be seen:

The fourth trumpet effected a darkening of the sunlight in the Church of God (not her life). It also effected the darkening of the third part of her external organization, and a third part of the influence of the angels ordained by God for her ministration.

The fifth trumpet opened the pit of the abyss, and the smoke arising out of it darkened the sun (the light of God) and the air (the higher sphere of the earth). Grass, *i. e.*, any green living thing, and trees (special plants of God) were not permitted to be hurt.

The sixth trumpet has in its indescribable vehemence and vast extent, as a center of its destroying elements, the darkening smoke, and also as a central characteristic of its horsemen, the dark red<sup>2</sup> of the hyacinth. It is

<sup>1</sup> A. J. Schem's *Conversat. Lexicon*, vol. x, p. 65.

<sup>2</sup> S. Ch. Schirlitz *Griechisch-Deutsch, Wörterb. zum N. Testament*, Giessen, 1851.

worthy of remark that of the four divisions of the Turks, with the exception of the first of the Moguls under Zingis-Khan, the propagation of the false doctrine of Mohammed formed the chief part of their devastation, and the most abiding effect of their work.

Darkness is the main characteristic of this long Third Division of our Period. The men of these times preferred darkness to the light of the Gospel, which they professed. They wanted darkness, and God let them have it in an overwhelming and fearful manner, shown by the events of these three trumpets.

VERSES 20, 21: "And the rest of men, which were not killed with these plagues, repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils and the idols of gold, and of silver, and of brass, and of stone, and of wood; which can neither see, nor hear, nor walk; and they repented not of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts."

These two verses give us the reason why God permitted these fearful judgments of the fifth and sixth trumpets to come upon these men: that they repent of the works of their hands, works of which they were themselves the authors. They chiefly consisted, 1. In devil-worship, by submitting to the suggestions and inspiration of seemingly pious but really devilish spirits, perverting the Gospel of God and turning it into an image of the beast, and worshiping this devilish construction as divine.<sup>1</sup> 2. In idol-worship, by doing honor and bowing down to images of gold, silver, brass, etc., representing saints, which in the sense of our text is worship. Iconolatry, or worship of images, figured very prominently in this Third Division of our Period. After having gradually taken solid root, and having become an abomination to the Jews and Mohammedans, the Christians themselves arose against it, and even the

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<sup>1</sup> 1 Tim. iv, 1-3; Rev. xiii, 14, 15; 1 Cor. x, 18-21.



power of the emperors. However, neither they nor the councils were able to remove this evil, and after more than a hundred years' exertion (726-842) and no little bloodshed the contest against it had to be given up as useless. Thus, this abomination remained not only until the time of our text, but even up to the present time. That the men repented not of this devil and idol worship is brought into prominence by being mentioned first. After that it is said: "And they repented not of their murders"—a prevailing sin in those times, and not least among the persons of rank and office. "Nor of their sorceries"—in the proper sense of the word, but also in the sense of deceitful and enticing ways. "Nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts"—sins which especially characterized those times, as history clearly shows.

#### INDICATION OF A NEW DIVISION OF OUR PERIOD.

REV. x, 1: "And I saw another strong angel coming down out of heaven, arrayed with a cloud; and the rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire."

According to the law of "seven" the sixth stage forms the close of a work. There is cessation and rest, and consequently the beginning of a new Division. This circumstance is clearly illustrated by this tenth chapter, for here something new is brought in after the six trumpets.

This strong angel, coming down out of heaven, is called another, compared with those who sounded the trumpets. His being arrayed with a cloud reminds us of the predicted coming of the Lord in a similar manner.<sup>1</sup> The rainbow upon his head—the sign of God's covenant—and his face as the sun,<sup>2</sup> i. e., shining, leave no room for doubts that he is the mighty angel of the

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<sup>1</sup> Acts i, 9-11.    <sup>2</sup> Rev. i, 16.

covenant, JESUS HIMSELF, for it is he, too, who has the promise that all things shall be laid under his feet; hence, his feet "as pillars of fire," signify the great power with which he shall tread down his enemies, and subject all things to himself. Even in the Old Covenant did the Lord appear as an angel.<sup>1</sup>

That after such terrible and long-continued judgments of darkness and devastation, Jesus, the mighty Angel of the Covenant, should show himself with his sun face, as also with his divine power and glory, is a very significant sign. It is a renewed assurance of his covenant, and of his faithfulness towards his people. As, after a storm of long duration, during which the elements rage fearfully, there is a calm, and the sun again shows his friendly face of light for the consolation and joy of men, so the Lord appears as the Sun of Life to his people, and as the one to whom the power over all things is given.

VERSE 2: "And he had in his hand a little book open: and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left upon the earth."

"A little scroll open," compared with the larger and sealed scroll of the fifth and sixth chapters; hence, signifying a new revelation—a revelation within the Revelation—in certain respects subordinate to that in the fifth and sixth chapters, but, nevertheless, containing very important things. "He set his right foot upon the sea"—upon the sphere of the beast and his adherents; "and his left upon the earth"—upon the sphere of the false prophet (the second beast) and his adherents. This is an act of great prophetic foresight, intimating how the Lord shall from this time hold these respective spheres under his power.

VERSE 3: "And he cried with a great voice, as a lion

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<sup>1</sup> Exod. iii, 2-14; Gen. xxii, 11-15; xviii, 2-20.

roared, and when he cried, the seven thunders uttered their voices."

The powerful angel received a mighty, and, doubtless, a concordant, answer from heaven. But, then, what it contained has not been deemed good for us to know.

VERSE 4: "And when the seven thunders uttered [their voices] I was about to write: and I heard a voice from heaven saying, Seal up the things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not."

VERSES 5-7: "And the angel which I saw standing upon the sea and upon the earth, lifted up his right hand to heaven and swore by him that liveth forever and ever, who created the heaven and the things that are therein, and the earth and the things that are therein, and the sea and the things that are therein, that there shall be time no longer; but in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, then is finished the mystery of God, according to the good tidings which he declared to his servants, the prophets."

Here we are most solemnly assured by an oath from the true and faithful witness, that the war of sin with righteousness, in the manner in which it has hitherto been the leading feature in the history of the world, shall not continue forever thus, but the time will come when this war shall end. That time will be, when the seventh angel is about to sound his trumpet. "The mystery of God" refers to the war of sin with righteousness. It is a mystery how God allows sin or evil not only to act, but also directs and overrules it by angels, as we had opportunity to see. He even gives the destroying instruments ability and power, thus using the evil for good purposes. It is a mystery that even the children of God are annoyed and tormented by this evil, yea, that in certain respects God himself suffers, as we see it in Christ, and yet finally every thing redounds to the praise and glorification of God. That this mystery

shall at a future time be finished, God has plainly declared by his servants, the prophets.<sup>1</sup>

VERSE 8: "And the voice which I heard from heaven [I heard it], again speaking with me, and saying, Go take the book which is open in the hand of the angel that standeth upon the sea and upon the earth."

A command which John immediately obeyed, as he says:

VERSES 9, 10: "And I went to the angel, saying unto him that he should give me the little book. And he saith to me, Take it and eat it up; and it shall make thy belly bitter, but in thy mouth it shall be sweet as honey. And I took the little book out of the angel's hand, and ate it up; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey; and when I had eaten it, my belly was made bitter."

This is a symbolic action. Ezekiel also was once commanded to eat a scroll, which was sweet as honey, and then he was sent to the house of Israel to speak the words of the Lord to them.<sup>2</sup>

The eating of this little book signifies evidently the reception of it into his own being, in consequence of which he was enabled to prophesy anew. John thus brings forth what God had previously, as by inspiration, put into him. It follows from this that the Revelation consists of three kinds of revelations: 1. According to the attributes of the Son, where Christ personally communicates to John the addresses to the seven Churches of Asia; 2. According to the attributes of the Father through the book with the seven seals; 3. According to the attributes of the Holy Spirit through inspiration, as also of old, men of God have spoken. In regard to the historical order of Revelation that of the Father is the first, then that of the Son, and then that of the Holy Spirit.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Psa.* xxxvii, 9, 11, 20, 38; *xlvi* and *xlvi* and *xcix*; *Isa.* xxiv, 21-23; *Jer.* xxv, 30-38; *Dan.* vii, 11-14; *Mal.* iv, 1-3. <sup>2</sup> *Ezek.* iii, 1-4. <sup>3</sup> *Rev.* v, 1.

That the little book was sweet in the mouth, but, after being eaten, made the belly bitter, probably signifies that the first impression which the events prefigured in this little book give is good or sweet for a disciple of the Lord; but when it comes to the real experience of all these events, there will be also bitterness in it. To this belongs the first series of events signified therein (the first four bowls), the sweetest of the whole Revelation. However, the three succeeding ones, and the other events directly following, belong to the most bitter, the worst which the people of God shall ever experience.<sup>1</sup>

VERSE 11: "And they say unto me, Thou must prophesy again of many peoples and nations and tongues and kings."

This new revelation for which John had been prepared in this chapter, and for which he here receives the commission, "Thou must prophesy again," is a prophecy concerning things which shall from that time befall or entangle many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings. This prophecy contains chiefly the seven last plagues, also called the seven bowls of the wrath of God, and thus constitutes PART IV, or THE TENOR, of the Revelation. Hence, according to the strict order of events, THE TENOR steps in after this tenth chapter, and connects with the preceding history.

#### A CHARACTERISTIC OF THE LAW OF FOUR.

As "four" is in a certain degree the fulfillment of the three foregoing, it thus appears as something new or by itself, and forms here a special part in regard to the three preceding: a new revelation, a book by itself, a little book, and open. The proper position of this tenth chapter of the Revelation is, then, that it constitutes the introduction and connecting link for the representation of a new series of events. Were we to follow the strict

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxiv, 21, 22.

order of time of the historic events, we would now have to introduce PART IV, or THE TENOR, of the Revelation. However, as we have explained *the Treble* and *the Base* wholly, without interruption, it will also be better for the understanding of THE ALTO to finish first its remaining—*i. e.*, the following eleventh chapter, and after that begin with *the Tenor*.

REV. XI, 1, 2: "And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and one said, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar and them that worship therein. And the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it hath been given unto the nations: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months."

Here is the temple of God made the special object of history and consideration. This is not the temple of God in heaven,<sup>1</sup> but that on earth, that building fitly framed out of the material of different nations, and growing into a holy temple in the Lord.<sup>2</sup> This temple is the Church of God, whose members constitute, through faith and regeneration, the real temple or true sanctuary of God; while Israel, as a merely external people, constitutes only an external part or court to this temple. This "court" is, during the present dispensation of salvation, trodden down, and considered as not existing and not coming into account, but given to the nations who "shall tread under foot" Jerusalem, the place which God had chosen for his external sanctuary, during the shorter prophetic extent of time of "forty and two months." The temple itself shall be measured—*i. e.*, the building, likewise the altar (of incense), which signifies its inner institution; and those who worship therein—*i. e.*, who belong to this temple and are serving their Lord therein—shall be measured. For what purpose?<sup>3</sup> Things are measured in order to get a definite conception of their

<sup>1</sup> Rev. xiv, 17; xv, 5.    <sup>2</sup> Eph. ii, 22.    <sup>3</sup> See note 22.

size and form. Having the measure, one is enabled to know whether any alteration or decrease from the established measure has taken place. Now this is a time when the temple of God is in great danger of suffering loss and destruction. To this end the general representation of this chapter chiefly tends. It refers to *the last time*, generally represented by *the fifth seal*,<sup>1</sup> where those who belong to the Church of God are, in regard to their bodies, killed, and their souls are under the altar. But let the enemies rage and their plan in part succeed! The measure of the temple of God and of the golden altar and of the number who worship therein is taken, and stands firm in the purpose of God. The enemies may desecrate the court; they may even lay their hands on the temple of God; but they shall not annihilate God's measure, nor even go beyond the bounds he has set to their rage. God shall know how to protect his sanctuary. Now here is an important fact which ought to be duly noticed:

THE TEMPLE OF GOD IN THE WORLD IS AT PRESENT WITHOUT A COURT.—The Holy and the Holy of holies are in the present time without such an external inclosure. Thus the Holy is only separated from the world by a veil, while the Holy of holies stands open before the Holy, as its veil is rent in twain from top to bottom. In the proper estimation of this fact, therefore, the position of the seven golden candlesticks—the seven Churches of Asia<sup>2</sup>—is one of deep signification; for they represent the temple of God—the Holy in its connection with the Holy of holies (Christ) without a court or external enclosure. Hereto belongs, also,

THE WONDERFUL AND GLORIOUS FIGURE OF THE PROPHET.<sup>3</sup>—When the Jews had returned from Babylon and were building again the temple at Jerusalem under Zerubbabel, the Lord showed to the prophet Zechariah

<sup>1</sup> Rev. vi, 9–11.

<sup>2</sup> Rev. i, 12–20.

<sup>3</sup> Zech. iv.

another temple, in explanation of which he said to him : " This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts."<sup>1</sup> This figure likewise represents the temple of God of the New Covenant, without a court. It was a candlestick all of gold, with a bowl upon the top of it, and his seven lamps thereon, and seven pipes to the seven lamps that were on the top thereof. Two olive-trees were by it, one upon the right side of the bowl and the other upon the left. From each of these olive-trees there was going out a branch or golden pipe, which poured golden oil into the bowl on the top of the candlestick. The explanation of this figure is not difficult. Even through the earlier prophets the Lord calls Israel repeatedly a green, beautiful olive-tree.<sup>2</sup> Paul likewise uses this figure to represent Israel as a nation. The Gentiles, also, are represented by him as a nation under this figure.<sup>3</sup> He calls Israel a *good* olive-tree, and the Gentiles a *wild* one. It is, however, well to remark that Israel is here not represented as a believing people, but simply as the people of the Covenant and of the promise. In order to become truly good, and be saved, Israel as well as the Gentiles must be renewed by the grace and Spirit of Christ.

The grace of Christ is essential to Israel. Without it, the Covenant and promise are of no avail. What the apostle, therefore, says of the grafting of the wild olive branches into the good olive-tree does not mean the grafting into Christ, but is only a transposition into the same relation with Israel in regard to the blessings of the Covenant and the promises of God. This ingraftment is useless even to the Gentiles if they do not appropriate to themselves by faith in Christ the blessings promised; hence, as sinners before God, there is here no difference,

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<sup>1</sup> Rev. iv, 6.    <sup>2</sup> Jer. xi, 16; Hos. xiv, 7.    <sup>3</sup> Rom. xi, 17-24.



nor is there any in the way of salvation. In their position as nations on earth, and in their relation to the order of salvation, they differ from each other. There they are not one tree, but two trees, and Israel has there an advantage.<sup>1</sup>

As "oil" is the symbol of unction and grace, we perceive here how this unction and grace permeates these trees, dwelling in them, and manifesting further constant activity or fruitfulness. They bring forth oil and pour it into the bowl, thus performing the service of the priest in the Holy place, and especially keeping burning and shining the sevenfold light of God in the Holy without a court, hence in the world. As such trees they are, individually and collectively, living and active witnesses of this unction and grace of God. They are, indeed, as the Lord himself calls them, "The two anointed ones that stand by the Lord of the whole earth."<sup>2</sup> They are the temple of God in the world, the Holy or sanctuary without a court; in other words, the Church of God consisting of the two chief divisions of mankind: *Israel* and *the Gentiles*. These two trees were already symbolized by the two pillars erected before the temple of Solomon, the one on the right, Jachin, representing Israel; the one on the left, Boaz, representing the Gentiles, as they were through Boaz with Ruth received among the people of God—into the spiritual temple—and brought into close relation with the seed of David. These remarks will further serve to make more intelligible what follows:

VERSE 3: "And I will give unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand, two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth."

God shall give to his two witnesses opportunity and ability to testify of him, and also to prophesy in regard

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<sup>1</sup> Rom. iii, 1, 2.    <sup>2</sup> Zech. iv, 14.

to things which he shall do. This prophesying is not performed in a triumphant position, but under depressing circumstances and in great humility, clothed in sackcloth, during a time of prophetic days, which make forty and two months. This time of days is the same as that during which the Church is described as having fled into the wilderness, where they should feed her.<sup>1</sup> There, too, it is for a thousand two hundred and threescore days; and to be in the wilderness, instead of being at home, is not pleasant.

VERSE 4: "These are the two olive-trees and the two candlesticks, standing before the Lord of the earth."

The definite article "the" two olive-trees, etc., brings these two subjects before us as if they had been mentioned and known before; and so they have. The Lord here repeats the same expression which he made through Zechariah, where he gives a more circumstantial description of our text, hence we know who these two witnesses and olive-trees are. They are not two single persons, but the people of God in two divisions, considered from a certain aspect. At the same time they are a unit, one in spirit, serving in one and the same sanctuary.

VERSE 5: "And if any man desireth to hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies; and if any man shall desire to hurt them, in this manner must he be killed."

These witnesses of God have enemies. However, if any man hurt them, they do not avenge themselves; but, as their mission is, they testify of the grace of God and also of his judgment, thus prophesying, and their prophecy is like a fire proceeding out of their mouth.<sup>2</sup> They commit vengeance to him to whom it belongs, and he shall, according to the word given his witnesses to speak,

<sup>1</sup> Rev. xii, 6.      <sup>2</sup> Jer. xxiii, 29.

visit the men with judgment in his own time. In this manner must be killed those who hurt these witnesses.

VERSE 6: "These have power to shut the heavens, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy; and they have power over the waters to turn them into blood, and to smite the earth with every plague as often as they shall desire."

Here we have first a miracle reminding us of the prophet Elijah, and then one which reminds us of Moses in Egypt. God's children of the New Covenant, as partakers of the spirit of Christ, are not only of equal standing with Elijah and Moses, but excel these through the Holy Spirit of Christ.<sup>1</sup> Christ declares that to him who believes nothing shall be impossible. The Christians have what Moses and Elijah did not have—a great High Priest at the throne of God; the man and Son of God, Jesus, who maketh intercession for us. That in those future days of great tribulation,<sup>2</sup> of which our text speaks, there shall be miracles effected by the united prayers of God's children on earth, similar to those in the days of Elijah and Moses—nay even surpassing them—is a fact presignified by the Word of God.

VERSE 7: "And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that cometh out of the abyss shall make war with them, and overcome them, and kill them."

The beast which is going to destroy Babylon the great, and all political and religious institutions existing within its dominion, will also destroy the Church of God so far as her external organization and visible existence are concerned. This John says in another place,<sup>3</sup> and Daniel says: "I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; until the Ancient of days came," etc.<sup>4</sup>

Does not the Lord say: "The gates of Hades shall

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<sup>1</sup> Matt. xi, 11.    <sup>2</sup> Matt. xxiv, 29.    <sup>3</sup> Rev. xiii, 7.    <sup>4</sup> Dan. vii, 21, 22.

not prevail against his Church?" Yes, certainly. However, that all the known disciples of the Lord shall be killed within the dominion of the beast, is no proof that the gates of Hades did really prevail against it. An unknown seed may still continue to exist.<sup>1</sup> God has elsewhere prepared a place in the wilderness for a part of his Church, where she shall be fed during the times of this great tribulation. Moreover, God is able to raise the dead to life again.

VERSE 8: "And their dead bodies [lie] in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom-and-Egypt, where also their Lord was crucified."

This "great city" is not the one called in verse 2 "the holy city" (Jerusalem), neither is it the great city of Babylon.<sup>2</sup> It is another, characterized by the name Sodom-and-Egypt, where the iniquities of Sodom and Egypt—the most abominable lasciviousness and the most tyrannical oppressions—predominate. It is the city which in another place<sup>3</sup> is mentioned with the cities (institutions) of the nations and Babylon the great, and where it was divided into three parts. This city is also in this eleventh chapter brought before us as consisting of ten parts, of which *one* falls (verse 10). The Scripture represents the same idea under the figure of a city as under the figure of a woman: *i. e.*, a social institution; therefore the Church of God is represented as such an institution under the figure of a woman and of a city; also Babylon and others. The beast is also represented as such an institution, as a woman and a city, for in the margin it is quite distinctly termed a she-leopard, ἡ πάρδαλις.<sup>4</sup> Hence, as a great secular institution, it is also a great city, yea, the city of our text; and the name Sodom-and-Egypt is undisputably for that future time, and in some degree even for the present, the most

<sup>1</sup> Rev. xii, 17.    <sup>2</sup> Rev. xiv, 8; xvii, 18.    <sup>3</sup> Rev. xvi, 19.

<sup>4</sup> Rev. xiii, 2.

suitable that could be given to it. It is, moreover, the city where the Lord of these two olive trees was crucified under the sixth head of the beast, which at that time reigned almost over the entire world and over the holy land.<sup>1</sup>

*"In the street."* This great city seems to have but one street. As a social institution it has not many regulations, but all runs in one direction, called lawlessness.

Something mysterious is implied by the omission of stating how the dead bodies of these witnesses shall be in the street of this great city. The word "lie" is not in the text, but only inserted for the intelligibility of the sentence. This word is purposely omitted. God will not definitely state beforehand how these beast-men shall treat his children at that time: whether they will kill them with the sword or by hanging or in still another way. Hence, whether their dead bodies shall publicly lie or hang in this great city can not beforehand be ascertained; but the words, "Where also their Lord was crucified," sound very significant in more than one respect.

VERSE 9: "And from among the peoples and tribes and tongues and nations do [men] look upon their dead bodies three days and a half, and suffer not their dead bodies to be laid in a tomb."

The possibility that peoples, tribes, tongues, and nations shall see these dead bodies in the street of this city is evinced by the fact that this city is so great that it actually consists of these peoples, tribes, tongues, and nations. This procedure of the beast, to which men assent in not suffering these dead bodies to be laid in a tomb, has manifestly for its purpose the intimidation of professors of divine truth. The mention of peoples, tribes, etc., intimates that, not simply in France, or Russia, or in other countries, the witnesses of Christ

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<sup>1</sup> See note 23.

shall be treated thus, but generally and everywhere in the kingdom of the beast, though the expression, "And from among the people," etc., seems to indicate a certain exception, that it shall not be in the same degree everywhere.

"Three days and a half," agrees with the two times, one time and half a time, and the forty and two months, and the thousand two hundred and three-score days (three years and a half); but especially does it agree with the last half of the seventieth week of Daniel,<sup>1</sup> where the antichrist shall, in the midst of this week, abrogate the privileges he had hitherto vouchsafed to the Jews; and where the corruption and wickedness of this son of perdition shall reach their climax, and of whom the Lord shall make an end by his coming. This whole eleventh chapter refers obviously to the last times, and this three days and a half (or probably as many years) denotes the very last and worst time represented by the fifth seal.

VERSE 10: "And they that dwell on the earth rejoice over them, and make merry; and they shall send gifts one to another, because these two prophets tormented them that dwell on the earth."

The earth, here, is not figurative, but is to be taken in its real signification. Because the believers out of Israel and the Gentiles witness and prophesy, they are thus actually prophets; but their testimony and prophecy is rather offensive, and is a torment to the men of the beast. Hence, after they have killed them, they greatly rejoice and send presents one to another, supposing that they have rid themselves of these tormentors, and that now they may continue their lawless course unmolested; but a sudden change will come, as the seer John closely connects the foregoing with the following great event:

VERSES 11, 12: "And after three days and a half the

<sup>1</sup> Dan. ix, 27; vii, 25; see also note 24.

breath of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which beheld them. And they heard a great voice from heaven, saying unto them, come up hither. And they went up into heaven in the cloud, and their enemies beheld them."

These unburied witnesses of Christ were at once brought to life—they arose from the dead. It will not be difficult for the Christian reader to interpret this prophecy, which is not figurative, but means literally what it says. Here takes place the resurrection of those who were killed for the testimony of Jesus, and who died in the Lord, which is the first resurrection of which Paul so plainly speaks.<sup>1</sup> Here shall those who fell asleep in Jesus arise from the dead; and those still alive in Jesus shall be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump. "The great voice from heaven," in our text, is that of the Lord and of the archangel.<sup>2</sup> This ineffable, great, sublime, and mighty event will be seen by the enemies of the believers, and "great fear will fall upon them." Besides that which is stated in the sixth seal,<sup>3</sup> the resurrection of the believers and their ascension into heaven forms the beginning of the indescribable terrors for the unbelievers on that great day.

VERSE 13: "And in that hour there was a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell."

"In that hour"—not long after the resurrection of the believers, a great revolution takes place on earth. The coming of the Lord effects a great change in the world, in civil, religious, and every other relation. The point here especially to be noticed is that the tenth part of the city (Sodom-and-Egypt) falls. Now what particular importance is there in this? Very much indeed. For on account of Israel's unbelief and dispersion, the

<sup>1</sup> 1 Thess. iv, 14-17; 1 Cor. xv, 21-54. <sup>2</sup> 1 Thess. iv, 16.  
<sup>3</sup> Rev. vi, 12-14; comp. Matt. xxiv, 29-41.

holy land came under the dominion of the worldly nations, and thus became a part, yea, "the tenth part of that great city." This happened as a judgment and punishment; but God has promised to have mercy on Israel, and to bring them again into their land, where they shall, as his peculiar people, serve him. The first thing he does after destroying the beast is to restore to his people the inheritance of which they have been so long deprived. "And the tenth part of the city fell," is, therefore, saying as much as: God remembers his covenant with his people. Israel's punishments, judgments, and casting off—consequently also the treading under foot of the holy city for forty and two months (verse 2)—have an end.<sup>1</sup> The times of the Gentiles are fulfilled, Israel's restoration begins, and it is as a people and a country, again God's own possession.<sup>2</sup>

"And there were killed in the earthquake seven thousand names of men: and the rest were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven."

When Israel, through Joshua, took possession of the land of Canaan, the Lord destroyed seven nations before it. When it shall, renewed in heart through Jesus, be again and forever established in its promised inheritance, there shall seven thousand names of men be killed. The beast, as the world institution and seven-headed monster, contains these seven thousand names of men. Only those who are worshipers of the beast are here killed. This number signifies evidently not merely so many persons, but "names of men" has reference to generations or other divisions of mankind, and consequently comprises many millions of men—all those who at the day of the Lord shall be killed.<sup>3</sup> All then not believing shall be killed. Only a remnant, which in this terrible

<sup>1</sup> Isaiah xl, 2.    <sup>2</sup> Acts i, 6, 7; Num. xxiii, 9.    <sup>3</sup> Isaiah xiii, 6-13; lxvi, 15, 16; Jer. xxv, 33, 34; Rev. xiv, 18-20; xix, 15-21.



hour sincerely turns to God—like that thief on the cross—and gives glory to the God of heaven and earth whose name men had ceased to honor, shall remain alive. This “remnant” consists of men of Israel and of other nations, and from it comes the new population of the earth from that time.<sup>1</sup> The believers arisen and changed, are from that time with their Lord in heaven, and reign from there as priests of God over the earth.<sup>2</sup> Of those who remain alive the Scriptures testify in numerous instances, and have very important things to say. For instance, let the lover of divine truth compare and consider passages like the following.<sup>3</sup> How they become such a remnant is likewise indicated.<sup>4</sup>

VERSE 14: “The second Woe is past; behold, the third Woe cometh quickly.”

While the fifth trumpet alone forms one Woe, so the whole time from the sixth trumpet to the present forms one Woe, and this is even to this day not yet past, but will be fulfilled with the day of the Lord. It is obviously very great in every respect. The third Woe is indicated as following the second quickly.

#### THE SEVENTH TRUMPET.

REV. XI, 15: “And the seventh angel sounded; and there followed great voices in heaven, and they said, The kingdom of the world is become [the kingdom] of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign forever and ever.”

Christ long ago received all power in heaven and earth; he has also guided all things by this, his power. He has hitherto had his kingdom in this world, but for all this there still existed here a kingdom, inimical to

<sup>1</sup> Isa. vi, 13; lxv, 8, 23; Zech. viii, 11-13. <sup>2</sup> Rev. i, 6; ii, 26, 27; Luke xix, 16-19; Rev. xx, 4, 5. <sup>3</sup> Isa. iv, 3; x, 20-23; comp. Rom. ix, 27-29; Isa. xi, 11, 16; Jer. xxxi, 2, 7; Ezek. xxxvi, 36; Mich. v, 6, 7; Zeph. ii, 7, 9; iii, 13; Zech. xiv, 16; Acts v, 17. <sup>4</sup> Isa. xxiv, 1-18; Hab. iv, 19; Mal. iii, 16-18; iv, 1-6.

his, based on unbelief and beastly nature. This kingdom was broken to pieces and abolished by him;<sup>1</sup> it went down in the great earthquake of verse 13. In its stead is established a "kingdom of the world," entirely in accordance with the plan and order of God, as he of old would have it, and as Israel should have been. The great voices in heaven declare that this kingdom has come into actual existence, and call it "the kingdom of the world of our Lord and of his Christ," in which he shall reign unto the ages of the ages, *i. e.*, forever. The establishing of this kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ over the whole earth is the third Woe for the kingdom of sin, because by this every hope for any further beginning is decidedly cut off forever. For though sin may be possible in the future, still it will never more obtain dominion. As that angel<sup>2</sup> lifted up his right hand to heaven, and swore by him that liveth forever and ever, that there shall be time no longer, but in the days of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, is finished the mystery of God. Consequently here begins the millennium. After this Christ's kingdom on earth will continue to exist until heaven and earth shall pass away, and the final judgment shall take place.<sup>3</sup>

Seven, as the fulfillment, always brings a new thing. This new thing introduced on earth is of such a great and glorious nature that it puts heaven in an attitude of worship and thanksgiving, as we read further:

VERSES 16-18: "And the four and twenty elders which sit before God on their thrones fell upon their faces, and worshiped God, saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God, the Almighty, which art and which wast; because thou hast taken thy great power, and didst reign. And the nations were wroth, and thy wrath came, and the time of the dead to be judged, and to give the reward to thy servants, the

<sup>1</sup> Dan. ii, 44, 45; Luke xx, 18.    <sup>2</sup> Rev. x, 6, 7.    <sup>3</sup> Rev. xx, 11-15.

prophets, and to the saints, and to them that fear thy name, the small and the great; and to destroy them that destroy the earth."

The thanksgiving of the elders refers to what God has done to the murderous beast, and also that the kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and his Christ. The great moral corruption is called a "getting wroth of the nation," which was met with the wrath of God. The time also came when the Lord reckoned with his servants to give every one his reward.<sup>1</sup> This took place before the destruction of those who destroyed the earth, *i. e.*, before the adherents of the beast suffered bodily destruction.<sup>2</sup>

VERSE 19: "And there was opened the temple of God that is in heaven; and there was seen in his temple the ark of his covenant; and there followed lightnings, and voices, and thunders, and a great hail."

Those who were on earth a temple of God have now been carried into heaven by the Lord, evidently for the purpose of serving there in the heavenly temple as priests of God, exercising a salutary influence upon the men yet living on earth, who, likewise constitute a temple on earth, and are thus maintaining a position worthy of the great dignity of man. The temple in heaven opened with the ark of God's covenant visible in it, shows the open spring of blessing and salvation, and the free access to it for the men on earth. The usual accompanying signs of the presence and manifestation of God, as also "the earthquake and great hail"—a revolution and great dashing to pieces—refer doubtless, like verse 18, to what has just before come to pass, and are a seal confirming the third Woe. The prophet also refers to the same, when he says: "But it shall hail in the coming down of the forest, and the city shall sink down

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<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxv, 15-30; Luke xix, 15-27.

<sup>2</sup> Rev. xix, 21.

into lowness."<sup>1</sup> "The forest" and "the city" designate the wicked. To this refers also: "And he shall cut down the thickets of the forest with iron, and Lebanon shall fall by a mighty one."<sup>2</sup>

A SHORT RÉSUMÉ OF THE ALTO.—It resembles the Base in this, that it begins its representation from the same point of time, but it specifies what the Base represents only in a general way. It specifies the condition of the seven Churches in Asia, giving us a picture of the Church of God at that time, and showing the changes that have taken place in her since the day of Pentecost, and that might further be expected to take place until the time of Constantine. This forms the First Division of the History of our Period: as also the first rider in the Base shows it as the time when the seed of evil is secretly sown in the Church of God, and is secretly developing during this time.

Then from Constantine, when the seed of evil and good pierces the soil, and when the Second Division of the History of our Period begins, the Alto shows in the first trumpet how a third part of the element and ground upon which the Church stood was burned, how also a third part of the strong plants of God, and the whole forthcoming young seed in the blade was consumed, because mere human and physical means were used for the furtherance of the growth of the divine seed and plants.

In the second trumpet God punishes this destructive meddling of the worldly power with the affairs of the Church of God, by the immense destruction brought about through the Huns, who were thrown in among the nations as a great mountain burning with fire.

In the third trumpet we are shown the further progress of the evil begun by the secret sowing, and then piercing the soil and becoming visible in the first trumpet.

<sup>1</sup> Isa. xxii, 19; simply to the margin.    <sup>2</sup> Isa. x, 34.

That great star or angel of the devil is falling here (in the third trumpet) from heaven, upon the men who hitherto had been so successfully engaged in the falsification of the Christian doctrines, and he is also falling upon these falsified doctrines themselves, which, as a system, constitute the image of the beast; consequently this image henceforward through this close connection with this angel of the devil becomes endowed with life, he giving breath (spirit) to it that this image of the beast does both speak and cause, etc.<sup>1</sup> These three trumpets together form the Second Division of our Period, presented by the second rider.

In the fourth trumpet the work of the adversary reaches the beginning of the highest stage. The sun, moon, and star characteristics of the Church of God are smitten, and a third part of them darkened.

In the fifth trumpet God permits Mohammedism like a smoke to come up out of the pit of the abyss as a divine judgment for the professors of Christianity, because they had helped Satan Number Three to construct that false system of doctrines, the image of the beast, and because they did worship it by doing it divine honor, it being the work of a devil.

In the sixth trumpet God permits and orders a still greater judgment to come over these men, because they did not repent. However, this judgment affects also other nations, even to the killing of the third part of men, and is the letting loose of the four angels at the great river Euphrates: the fearful devastations of the Turkish nation. These last three trumpets constitute the Third Division of our Period, represented by the third rider. (Then follows in the tenth chapter a glorious interval, where *the Tenor*, containing the chapters xv, xvi, xvii, xviii, and xix, makes its connection.)

The historical continuation of *the Alto* to the sixth

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<sup>1</sup> Rev. xiii, 15.

trumpet follows, then, in the eleventh chapter. Here we have first the measurement of the temple of God, and of the altar, and of them that worship therein. This temple is the Church of God, and is for forty and two months without a court. The two witnesses, also called "the two olive-trees" and "the two candlesticks," are enabled to prophesy and to evince a wonderful power. With this is then connected the history of the very last days of our period—the killing of these witnesses, their resurrection and ascension into heaven; and the destruction of the wicked, where a remnant gives glory to the God of heaven at this coming of the Lord, just before the beginning of the millennium.

With the seventh trumpet there begins a new time—the great Sabbath, the kingdom of the world under the iron scepter of Christ and his people, a theocracy over all the earth.



THE TENOR  
OF THE  
HISTORY OF OUR PRESENT PERIOD.

A Specific Representation

OF THIS HISTORY FROM ABOUT TWO HUNDRED YEARS  
BEFORE THE REFORMATION UNTIL THE  
COMING OF OUR LORD.



## Explanation of Part IV.

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# THE TENOR OF THE HISTORY OF OUR PRESENT PERIOD.

(FROM REV. XV TO REV. XIX.)

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### Fourth Division of our Period.

## The Times Influenced by Death.

FROM

ABOUT TWO HUNDRED YEARS BEFORE THE REFORMATION  
TO THE FALL OF BABYLON. (REV. XVI, 17.)

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REV. XV, 1: "And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous, seven angels having seven plagues, [which are] the last, for in them is finished the wrath of God."

As already indicated, according to the true order of events, THE TENOR comes in and begins its historical representations directly after the tenth chapter. It contains the new revelation announced by that little book in the tenth chapter. It is this new revelation which John calls here "another sign," in comparison to the one which he formerly saw in heaven.<sup>1</sup> "Great and marvelous things" are signified by these signs, as there are now seven other angels appearing, commissioned by God to introduce another series of events, called the seven *last* plagues, with which the wrath of God will be finished. This manifestation of wrath through seven plagues is an addition to the wrath of God unfolded in

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<sup>1</sup> Rev. xii, 1.

the fifth and sixth trumpets, and fills the interval between the sixth and seventh trumpets. God will not, immediately after the sixth trumpet, let the seventh be sounded, for this would be the end of time (of his long suffering), and the finishing of his mystery. He therefore grants to men another space of time, in order to move them by these seven plagues to genuine repentance.

VERSES 2-4: "And I saw as it were a glassy sea mingled with fire; and them that come victorious from the beast, and from its image and from the number of its name, standing by the glassy sea, having harps of God. And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvelous are thy works, O Lord God, the Almighty; righteous and true are thy ways, thou King of the ages. Who shall not fear, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy; for all the nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy righteous acts have been made manifest."

This heavenly scene is manifestly a prognostic of what now, during the further time granted by the Lord, shall come to pass. The beast and its image, and the number of its name, are here placed in the foreground in this contest. For this reason are those who are victorious at this contest especially rendered prominent as saved ones for the encouragement of all who have this conflict still before them. The "glassy sea mingled with fire" may refer to the molten sea, the water of purification of the priests in their service in the temple. In any case it intimates that these victors have purified themselves, and kept pure from the defilements of the beast and its image and the number of its name. Hence they sing the song of Moses and of the Lamb. Moses' song of triumph at the Red Sea, when he, with Israel, had safely passed through it, and the song of the Lamb, when Christ by submitting to that baptism prefigured by Israel's passage through the Red Sea, had accomplished

the purification of our sins, and cried: "It is finished." The song of these victors had also reference to all things which God has done in the whole history of this our period. Here his works are indeed great and marvelous, his ways righteous and true. He alone is holy; and this shall be acknowledged by all nations, for the righteous acts of God have been made manifest. The term "King of the ages" intimates that the many subdivisions of time of our world's duration, called ages, are, in the formation of their character not merely the result of men's plans and exertions, but they are governed by God, and made subservient to his purposes.

VERSE 5: "And after these things I saw, and the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened."

Notice well what, in opposition to that which shall come to pass on earth, is to be done in heaven. "The temple of the tabernacle of the testimony was opened." This is certainly a good omen for the temple of God on earth, whose testimonies have hitherto suffered so much.

#### THE TESTIMONIES OF GOD SHALL NOW BE MADE MANIFEST.

VERSE 6: "And there came out from the temple the seven angels, that had the seven plagues, clothed in pure, shining linen, and girt about the breasts with golden girdles."

Excepting the golden girdles, the clothing of these angels is like to that of the high-priest on the great day of atonement, when he entered the Holy of holies.<sup>1</sup>

VERSE 7: "And one of the four living creatures gave unto the seven angels seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever."

Bowls are vessels with a broad bottom and of greater

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<sup>1</sup> Lev. xvi.

circumference than depth. They were used for drinking and other purposes. They had also their own use in the tabernacle.<sup>1</sup> In our text, however, their use is not exactly *in* the temple, though in connection with it; for, filled with the wrath of God, they are given to seven angels coming out from the temple, and their purpose is to effect on earth, in seven different relations, great and marvelous events.

VERSE 8: "And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from his power; and no one was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels should be finished."

God's glory and power are especially mentioned as manifest and filling this temple in heaven during the time of the service of these angels, and no one could enter this temple before they had performed their important task. The connection between this heavenly temple and the one on earth is thus clearly seen. How the larger division of these bowls, the first four, shall marvelously and gloriously affect the temple or Church of God on earth, we shall presently see.

#### THE POURING OUT OF THE BOWLS.

REV. XVI, 1: "And I heard a great voice out of the temple, saying to the seven angels, Go ye, and pour out the seven bowls of the wrath of God into the earth."

As no one could enter the temple till the seven plagues were finished, so must this great voice out of the temple be his, whose glory filleth it. The command is given to all the seven together. As "the earth" here designates the general scene of action where all seven bowls are poured out, it is not to be taken in a figurative sense.

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<sup>1</sup> Ex. xxv, 29.

## FIRST BOWL.

VERSE 2: "And the first went, and poured out his bowl into the earth; and there came a noisesome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and which worshiped his image."

This first bowl of the four, which together constitute a whole by itself, gives us the fundamental tone of the four, and requires, on account of its fundamental signification, also, a more comprehensive explanation. If it appeared evident that "the earth," in verse 1, was not to be taken figuratively, but in its natural signification, so does it appear equally evident here that "the earth," in opposition to the sea, rivers, etc., into which the following bowls are poured is necessarily to be taken figuratively.

SOME GENERAL INFERENCES CONCERNING THIS BOWL.—1. This first bowl, as is seen, touches that element which is solid and implies principle, but which is earthy and the element out of which the false prophet comes forth, and in which he moves. "The earth" as a figure designates such men as, indeed, acknowledge earthly, but also heavenly principles, though the earthly occupy the first place. For this reason they stand under the influence of the false prophet.<sup>1</sup>

2. The men here mentioned in the text are described as directly influenced by this false prophet, and as doing him homage: which had the mark of the beast, and which worshiped his image.

3. They are here represented as a body, for it is said that through the first bowl there came a noisesome and grievous sore upon them, who had the mark of the beast, and who worshiped his image. Sores can only come into existence in a body; and that there was only one sore, shows that but one and the same plague came upon these men together as a body.

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<sup>1</sup> Rev. xiii, 11.

4. This sore is described as noisome and grievous—an exceedingly bad sore.

5. A sore is the gathering of impurities in the blood, and can only take place where there is sufficient power of life to separate such impurities, then drive them into one place on the surface of the body and eject them from it.

6. It takes thus some time to form a sore.

7. This bowl is, according to this, a stimulation of the existing powers of life in the body of the false prophet or secularized Church, for the separation and ejection of impurities from it.

THE TIME WHEN IT TOOK PLACE.—When did such a stimulation of the powers of life for the purification of the body mentioned take place? We answer: About two hundred years before the Reformation; for the time which comprises this bowl and the formation of this sore is only *the preparation* for the reformation. The corruptions in doctrines and practices, which were gradually brought into existence in the Church, especially since the third and fourth trumpets, and which reached their highest stage in the Middle Ages, are the impurities which showed themselves in the system of that body. They showed themselves in such numbers and shapes, that to those who yet possessed divine life, they appeared extremely threatening and intolerable. The more divine knowledge and conscientiousness the members of that body had, the greater became their aversion and horror in looking at these corruptions; in addition to this the more power of life there was in them the more decided and powerfully did they work for a separation and ejection of these impurities from their system. The members who were dead in these impurities, remained consequently indifferent and inactive. Those who were alive, or even had a general knowledge and a proper sense of right and truth, could not consent to such a state of things, but felt obliged to speak and to work.

By such united activity then, by making known the corruptions of the so-called Church, and by a determined demand for a purification or reformation, the corruptions were thus, as such, placed in the light and on the public pillory. Their exposition, compilation, and accumulation, effected by the powers of life in their own body, were actually the means by which that noisome and grievous sore was formed, and where it could, during about two hundred years, plainly be seen growing.

**HISTORICAL ILLUSTRATIONS.**—It is not to be denied that witnesses of the evangelical truth, like the Waldenses and others, whatever their names may be, have exercised no small influence toward placing the corruptions of the Church in the true light. Yet it ought to be remarked, that a sore is not so much brought about by influences outside of the body, as by those in the body itself. The impurities here existing in the body on the one hand, as also the existing powers of life on the other, constitute, therefore, two chief sources of historical illustration.

1. Concerning the impurities, they had evidently their first cause in the moral corruption of man, but also in the union of the state with the Church, by which the wicked world was, under a religious form, received into the Church, and exercised by its great majority a preponderating, but unholy influence. Impurity had from that time the upper hand, and penetrated gradually every part of that body. It was now a very difficult task for the small number of true Christians to keep themselves undefiled from this impure worldly influence, for we well know that the whole original body of doctrines of the Church was changed, corrupted, and defiled. There appeared a system of doctrines shaped according to the mind of the spirit of the world or beast, and hence an image of the beast.<sup>1</sup> The waters were

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<sup>1</sup> Rev. xiii, 14.

made bitter in such a degree that they not only engendered noisome and grievous conditions, but that even many men died.<sup>1</sup> So also the woman, sitting upon the beast, with the "golden cup in her hand, full of abomination and filthiness of her fornication," refers to the doctrines engendering corruptions, which that woman is presenting as a drink to the nations.<sup>2</sup> This system of corrupted principles and doctrines exists in the Romish Church to this day, and had only a few years ago an addition of new doctrines. As it will be seen that out of the last added doctrine, the infallibility of the pope, there may easily be produced, according to circumstances, an unspeakable amount of evil, so was it also possible to produce by the doctrines formerly set up, that which during these two hundred years before the reformation, besides many other corruptions, very boldly arose, and finally caused the rupture of the Church. We mean the selling of indulgences. Already Pope "Boniface VIII, in the year 1300, published a bull in which he declared to the Church that every hundred years all who made a pilgrimage to Rome should receive a plenary indulgence. . . . Roman avarice soon fixed each jubilee at fifty, then at thirty-three, and lastly at twenty-five years interval. Then, for the greater convenience of purchasers, and greater profit of the sellers, both the jubilee and its indulgences were transported from Rome to every market-place in Christendom. It was no longer necessary to leave one's home. What others had gone in search of beyond the Alps, each man could now buy at his own door."<sup>3</sup>

The impurities and corruptions consisted not only in doctrines, but also in works which emanate from doctrines and thoughts. These are described to us as follows: "Worship of devils, and of idols of gold, and of

<sup>1</sup> Rev. viii, 11.      <sup>2</sup> Rev. xvii, 4.      <sup>3</sup> Merle D'Aubigne, Hist. of the Reform, vol. i, p. 58.



silver, and of brass, and of stone, and of wood; which can neither see, nor hear, nor walk;" also, "murders, sorceries, fornication, and thefts."<sup>1</sup> This, however, is stating it only in general. When we consider the Church of this time, more particularly her leaders from the popes to the common priests, and by inferring from them what the condition of the common people must have been, the whole corruption appears truly shocking. "From 1309-1377 the court of the pope was transferred to Avignon, in France, where it became more and more the center of moral and religious frivolity and looseness."<sup>2</sup> "Then followed, from 1378-1409, the papal schism, in consequence of which two popes, each surrounded by a college of cardinals, anathematized each other. Later there were even three such popes, anathematizing each other."<sup>3</sup> Pope John XXIII was accused before the council at Constance of murder, immorality, and simony, and was deposed.<sup>4</sup> Of his successors, since Pius II, till the Reformation, almost all were noted for their dissoluteness, vileness, or at least for want of piety. Sixtus IV increased the revenues of his see by instituting brothels in Rome. Innocent VIII had sixteen illegitimate children. Alexander VI, among other enormities, was greatly suspected of incest with his daughter, *Lucrezia*.<sup>5</sup>

Of bishops and priests before the Reformation we read: "The dignitaries of the Church preferred the tumult of camps to the hymns of the altar. To be able, lance in hand, to reduce his neighbors to obedience, was one of the chief qualifications of a bishop. Baldwin, archbishop of Treves, was continually at war with his neighbors and his vassals. He demolished their castles, built strongholds, and thought of nothing but the extension of his territory. A certain bishop of Eichstadt,

<sup>1</sup> Rev. ix, 20, 21.    <sup>2</sup> Dr. J. H. Kurtz, Church Hist., Philadelphia, Lindsay & Blakiston, vol. i, p. 466.    <sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 467.  
<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 468.    <sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 470.

when administering justice, wore a coat of mail under his robes, and held a large sword in his hand. He used to say he was not afraid of five Bavarians, provided they attacked him in fair fight. Everywhere the bishops were continually at war with their towns. The citizens demanded liberty, the bishops required implicit obedience. If the latter gained the victory, they punished the revoltors by sacrificing numerous victims to their vengeance; but the flame of insurrection burst out again at the moment when it was thought to be extinguished."<sup>1</sup> "The bishops commonly lived in open concubinage. The lower secular clergy followed their example, and in many cases paid for this indulgence a yearly tax to the bishop. To this arrangement the people—who distinguished between the office and its holder—made no objection; in fact, it secured their wives and daughters from the temptations of the confessional. Thousands of loose women from all countries had assembled at Constance and Basle during the sittings of the councils. Unnatural vices also were too common among the clergy, at least in Italy."<sup>2</sup> "The rural districts were the scene of numerous disorders. The abodes of the clergy were often dens of corruption. Corneille Adrian at Bruges, the abbot Trinkler at Cappel, imitated the manners of the East, and had their harems. Priests, consorting with dissolute characters, frequented the taverns, played at dice, and crowned their orgies with quarrels and blasphemy. In many places the priest paid the bishop a regular tax for the woman with whom he lived, and for each child he had by her. A German bishop said publicly one day, at a great entertainment, that in one year eleven thousand priests had presented themselves before him for that purpose. It is Erasmus who relates this."<sup>3</sup> Let us now consider,

<sup>1</sup> Merle D'Aubigne, vol. i, p. 65, 66.  
p. 472.

<sup>3</sup> Merle D'Aubigne, vol. i, p. 65.

<sup>2</sup> J. H. Kurtz,

2. *The yet existing and active powers of life.* There were at all times some pious souls who testified against the corruptions, though they themselves may not have been free from errors in every respect. They were commonly called Mystics, because they were not satisfied with mere external religious forms, but sought earnestly the inner and hidden life with Christ in God, which was designated as mysterious or mystic. We have met such people in the explanation of the Third Division of our Period as those with whom "the oil and the wine were not hurt."<sup>1</sup> They were the quiet ones in the land, who, so far as it was in their power, lived on wheat—i. e., on the Word of God. Though their views concerning the whole truth of the Gospel may not have been perfectly correct, yet their testimony of the living Christ *in* them could not fail to prove itself an outgoing, active power of life. "Two sentiments meet us in all the Mystics of that age—genuine sorrow for the decay of the Church, and equally ardent longing for a reformation."<sup>2</sup> Now, evidently most of these witnesses of divine truth are unknown to us, and comparatively only a few names remain in remembrance because of their uncommon activity and their writings, as, for instance, "Johannes Tauler at Strasburg, one of the most powerful preachers of any age, whose labors seem to have been richly blessed. His own conversion and spiritual growth were in a great measure due to the intercourse with Nicholas of Basle, the 'friend of God.'"<sup>3</sup> "During the fourteenth century a widespread and deep spirit of mysticism seemed to pervade all Western Germany, from the Low Countries to the borders of Italy. In truth, a religious awakening had taken place among the people, though from peculiar causes it bore a mystic and contemplative character. All ranks and classes, inmates of monasteries and Beguins, knights in their castles, artisans in their workshops, and merchants

<sup>1</sup> Rev. vi, 6.    <sup>2</sup> J. H. Kurtz, p. 493.    <sup>3</sup> J. H. Kurtz, p. 494.

in their warehouses, alike came under its influence. Ultimately it led to the formation of a great fraternity of so-called Friends of God, the various associations of which kept up personal or epistolary intercourse. From the year 1340 a mysterious personage evidently presided over this movement, and results, wider than those formerly sought, began to be aimed at. Most of 'the Friends' themselves seem to have been ignorant of the name or residence of this man. They called him 'the enlightened layman,' and 'the great friend of God from the Oberland.' Twice only is the mystery partly cleared away, and we hear of the name of Nicholas of Basle. About 1340 he appeared at Strasburg. Again in 1356, when Basle was visited by a fearful earthquake, he addressed a letter—a call to repentance—to all Christendom. In 1367 he retired into the Swiss mountains with four of his most intimate associates, and when Gregory XI returned to Rome in 1377, Nicholas and one of his associates confronted him, urging upon him the present situation, the dangers, and the requirements of the Church. The pope at first received him with distrust, but dismissed him in a very different spirit. Several years later Nicholas and two of his associates were burned by order of the Inquisition at Vienne, on the charge of being Beghards."<sup>1</sup> Others of the same spirit were: "Henry Suso, a Dominican at Ulm, also called Amandus; John Ruysbrock, an Augustine monk at Brussels; Herman of Fritzlar, a pious layman; Rulman Merswin, a wealthy merchant and broker in Strasburg, who subsequently joined the 'Friends of God,' and gave his riches to benevolent objects; Otto von Passau, and others; later also Thomas á Kempis, the author of many tracts, to whom the well known book on the 'Imitation of Christ' is generally ascribed."<sup>2</sup> He was a member of a pious association then existing, and called *The Brethren of Common Life*. It is said of

<sup>1</sup> J. H. Kurtz, pp. 484, 485.      <sup>2</sup> J. H. Kurtz, pp. 494, 495.

these "Brethren" that they prepared the way for the Reformation in many respects; and, indeed, most of them afterwards became its cordial adherents.<sup>1</sup>

Those men who in those times, as teachers of religion, presented the pure truths of the Scriptures, belonged to the active powers of life. "Such a one was Nicholas de Lyra, a Jewish convert from Normandy, and teacher of theology at Paris. (He died 1340.) In translating the Bible, Luther largely availed himself of the commentaries of Lyra. Accordingly the enemies of the reformer were wont to say: *Si Lyra non lyrasset, Lutherus non saltasset*—*i. e.*, If Lyra had not played, Luther would not have danced. Another was Thomas of Bradwardine, archbishop of Canterbury (who died 1349), a man of deep piety, and the teacher of John Wycliffe. Still another was the learned and acute Raymond of Sabunde at Toulouse, the founder of the science of natural theology, designed to exhibit the agreement between the book of nature and that of revelation."<sup>2</sup> These and others were excelled by John Wycliffe, who boldly and publicly lifted his voice against the corruptions of the Church. He was born 1324. As a fellow of the University of Oxford, which was then involved in a controversy with the mendicant monks, Wycliffe appeared in 1360 against these monks, and in 1366 in defense of the English crown against the demands of the papal court (then at Avignon), for feudal imposts. This secured him the favor of the English court, which conferred the doctorate upon him, appointing him professor of theology in Oxford, and 1374 placed him on an embassy to the pope to effect an adjustment of existing difficulties. He then learned by immediate observation how corrupt papacy was. After his return, he spoke and wrote openly against the papal "Antichrist" and its system. Gregory XI condemned nineteen points in his writings, but the

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<sup>1</sup> J. H. Kurtz, pp. 474-478.    <sup>2</sup> J. H. Kurtz, p. 492.

English court protected him against punishment. Wycliffe became more bold, formed societies of pious men to preach the Gospel among the people (their enemies called them Lollards), and translated the Bible (from the Vulgate) into English."<sup>1</sup> In and around Prague, Bohemia, there were even before the time of Huss three earnest preachers preparing the way by their evangelical sermons and by their pastoral labors among the people. These were Conrad of Waldhausen, John Milicz, and Matthias of Janov. Milicz seems to have had the clearest insight into evangelical truths, while Janov was the loudest in his denunciations of ecclesiastical abuses. All three gathered vast audiences around them. In 1376 Milicz went to Rome to bear testimony against ecclesiastical corruptions in the capital of Christendom. He was soon silenced in a prison; however, by the good offices of some friends again liberated.<sup>2</sup> John Huss was born 1369. From 1398 he occupied the chair of philosophy in the University of Prague. Even before his public appearance he had passed through deep personal experiences, realizing his own sinfulness, and ultimately finding peace and comfort in the Word of God and in the cordial reception of the crucified Savior. These truths became a source of new life to him, and then he proclaimed, when called in 1402 to officiate as preacher in the Bethlehem Chapel at Prague. Hitherto he had only been superficially acquainted with the writings of Wycliffe; but when Jerome of Prague, a Bohemian knight, returned from Oxford, an enthusiastic adherent of Wycliffe, he persuaded his friend to examine more fully the writings and opinions of the British reformer.<sup>3</sup> Huss was burnt in Constance July 6, 1415, and, one year later, Jerome of Prague. In the times of John Huss a desire and demand for a reformation of the Church had become

<sup>1</sup> J. H. Kurtz, p. 500.

<sup>2</sup> J. H. Kurtz, p. 502.

<sup>3</sup> J. H.

Kurtz, pp. 502, 503.

general, and the subject was even taken in hand by the council at Constance. The emperor and the Germans now insisted that the proposed reformation should precede a new election to the papacy, but they were unsuccessful. Cardinal Colonna was chosen as Martin V, and all hopes of a reformation were again at an end. The intrigues of the new pontiff proved only too efficacious. Separate agreements were made with individual nations; and the council, which had at any rate grown tired of its protracted labors, was dissolved after the forty-fifth general session. The pope granted to all the members plenary indulgence to the hour of their death, and left the town in triumph.<sup>1</sup> In the council at Basle from 1431-1443 the question of the reformation was again taken up, but the discussions led to no real action concerning it.

Other active powers of life for a reformation of the Church had their hearth in the University of Paris. Among its representatives were: Peter D'Ailly, chancellor of the University of Paris, from 1396 bishop of Cambray, and from 1411 also cardinal. John Charlier of Gerson, Doctor Christianissimus, the pupil and successor of D'Ailly at Paris. He strenuously insisted that a general council was superior to the pope—a principle which, in his opinion, was absolutely necessary for any genuine reformation. Nor was he merely alive to the outward defects in the Church. On the contrary, he was wont to appeal to the Bible as the only source and rule of Christian knowledge. Nicholas of Clemangis, rector of the University of Paris, from which he retired into solitude, died about 1440. Of all divines in the Church he perceived most clearly existing abuses, and most fully recognized the authority of the Scriptures as the rule of belief and of judgment. Louis D'Allemand, cardinal and archbishop of Arles, the ablest and most eloquent

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<sup>1</sup> J. H. Kurtz, p. 468.

member of the anti-papal party at Basle. He was excommunicated and deposed by Eugene IV.<sup>1</sup> Among other nations appeared also such forces. In Germany, (1) Henry of Langenstein near Marburg. He insisted that princes and prelates should summon a general council in order to put an end to the papal schism, and to begin a reformation in the Church. A treatise of his appeared in 1381. It contained a humbling, but unfortunately too correct account of the desolate state of the Church. The monasteries he designated "*prostibula meretricum*," and the cathedral Churches "*speluncæ raptorum et latronum*." (2) Theodore of Niem (Neheim) was secretary to Gregory IX, with whom he went from France to Rome. He afterward became bishop of Verdun. (3) Gregory of Heimburg. (4) In part, also, Nicholas of Cusa.<sup>2</sup> In Holland, (1) John Pupper of Goch, prior of a cloister of canonesses at Malines which he himself had founded. From his writings we gather that he was a man of deep piety. He insists at great length that love, which constitutes the liberty of God, forms the great subject-matter of theology, while the exclusive authority of Scripture affords the sole resting-point of Christian truth. (2) John Wessel from Grœningen, educated by the Brethren of the Common Life at ZwoU, where Thomas á Kempis exercised considerable influence upon him. His friends called him "*Lux Mundi*" (light of the world). Luther said of him: "If I had read Wessel before I began, my opponents would have imagined that Luther had derived every thing from Wessel—so entirely do we agree in spirit." (3) The priest Nicholas Russ of Rostock (near the end of the fifteenth or beginning of the sixteenth century). He zealously assailed the hierarchy, monasticism, indulgences, work-righteousness, the worship of relics and saints. He also kept up intimate intercourse with the

<sup>1</sup> J. H. Kurtz, p. 497.

<sup>2</sup> J. H. Kurtz, pp. 497, 498.



Waldenses in Bohemia, and had to endure much defamation and persecution on account of his reformatory efforts, and finally died as an exile in Livonia. Finally, in Italy, Jerome Savonarola, a Dominican, had learned the truths of the Gospel from Scripture and from the writings of St. Augustine. These truths he proclaimed at Florence (from 1489). His brilliant oratory, his bold denunciations of the corruptions prevalent among clergy and laity, princes and people, attracted crowds around him. Many an obstinate sinner was aroused by having his most secret sins disclosed. What his enemies, especially Pope Alexander VI, could not effect by the offer of a cardinal's hat, was accomplished by the folly of a fickle populace. An excited mob made him prisoner. He was condemned to the stake, and died, submitting to his doom with child-like confidence in Him who had died on the cross (1498).<sup>1</sup>

THE WHOLE TAKEN TOGETHER.—Now, if we consider how all these and many other powers which, in almost every part of this body, agreed to declare war against existing impurities and to separate them from the body; and how, while doing this, they all worked in this one direction, and aimed at this one point: we see the realization of what our text figuratively expresses. "There came (into being) a noisome and grievous sore on the men which had the mark of the beast, and which worshiped his image." The impurities and corruptions were all driven to one point, and to that part of this body which liked the corrupt characteristic of this second beast or false prophet, and which worshiped the image of the beast or false system of doctrines. On those who were purifying themselves from these impurities and corruptions, driving these from them, the sore could not come into being.

THE PURPOSE OF THIS BOWL.—Here is something

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<sup>1</sup> J. H. Kurtz, pp. 508-510.

new. For the first time in the history of the Revelation the Church of God, through her leader, God, steps forth as aggressor. Hitherto she acted seemingly only on the defensive, against the attacks of the enemy; but now the attack comes from her. The enemy's last endeavor was to darken the Church, wherein he partly succeeded, and upon which success he evidently intended to attack her life. Here the Church gained the advantage by attacking the impurities and corruptions which, under the co-operation of darkness, were about to destroy the element of life in her. The contest was one for life or death. Thus, it is obvious, that this first bowl—the key-note of the first four—was directed against death or against that which was used as the means to effect death. It was a powerful unfolding and spreading of life still existing in the body, having its seat in the blood, and fighting against death in its rise, preventing its coming into existence, and driving the impurities out of the body. This new formation of things, this energetic interference of God, enabling the Church to make such an attack, is, therefore, clearly indicated in the tenth chapter, by the coming down out of heaven of that strong angel arrayed with a cloud, and the rainbow upon his head, and his face as the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire, treading under his power the sea and the earth; proclaiming his victory in this contest, as also the time of its close. For this reason the enemy appears with the greatest force he is able to raise, viz.: with death personified and Hades following with him. With the seven bowls begins the last great conflict.

#### SECOND BOWL.

REV. xvi, 3: "And the second poured out his bowl into the sea; and it became blood as of a dead man."

The first bowl touched the element of the false prophet; the second touches the element of the beast or

the worldly kingdom. The sea, which represents the worldly men as a united mass, "became blood as of a dead man." If it simply read: "It became blood," this figure would be already explained;<sup>1</sup> but the expression, "As of a dead man," has another signification. Now, as the first of the four bowls touches likewise the blood as an element of life, there lies in this a plain hint in which direction the signification of this figure may be found. For if the blood of a live man is his element of life, as God says: "The blood is the life, and the life of the flesh is in the blood,"<sup>2</sup> then "blood as of a dead man" must mean an element of life that has died. As such it indeed maintains the color of blood, but life is wanting. Such an element must the worldly kingdom have become by the outpouring of this second bowl. This signification also agrees with what is further stated as a consequence of this change.

"And every soul of life died [even] the things that were in the sea."

"Soul of life" (or, as others translate it, living soul; living being), is different from "creatures which were in the sea, that had soul,"<sup>3</sup> where we perceived that they meant the numerous political institutions or bodies in the worldly empire. Though something similar to that is here signified, yet there is a difference. Those "creatures" had only souls, *i. e.*, they were only soul-creatures; but those in our text are "souls of life." This addition marks them as higher beings than the former, and a closer consideration of the meaning of "soul" and "life" makes this difference still more evident. "Soul," when used in the adjective sense, has in the Scripture the signification of "natural" and "sensual," and is so translated, as: "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God," etc.<sup>4</sup> Here it reads in the Greek:

<sup>1</sup> Rev. viii, 8. <sup>2</sup> Deut. xii, 23; Lev. xvii, 11. <sup>3</sup> See margin, Rev. viii, 9. <sup>4</sup> I Cor. ii, 14.

The soul-man. So is wisdom that comenth not from above, called earthly, sensual, "devilish;"<sup>1</sup> and Jude calls those walking after their own ungodly lusts, sensual, having not [the] Spirit.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, when the Bible speaks of the spiritual and divine life, we read not soul, *ψυχή*, but life, *ζωή*, as: "In him (Christ) was life."<sup>3</sup> "And ye will not come to me that ye may have life."<sup>4</sup> So it is everywhere where the salvation of God and the spiritual life of the believer is meant. The term, "soul of life," in our text, does not mean mere natural-minded and political beings, but beings of higher descent, and animated by a higher life, even by that of Christ. Thus, as in Rev. viii were meant the different nations in their natural and worldly state of mind, which, as various creatures, were moving around in this sea of men; so are here meant, as we shall presently see more clearly, the various denominations of Christians possessing true spiritual life. These died in this sea, and the reason is obvious. The blood as of a dead man, into which this sea had been transformed, has caused their death. Once, when the river in Egypt was changed into blood, the fish died. In the sea of this world the effect of a dead element upon living beings can not be expected to be otherwise.

NOW, WHAT EVENT IS SIGNIFIED BY THESE FIGURES?—The answer lies near. The purpose of the first bowl was to separate and to drive the impurities out of the body of the false prophet (*i. e.*, his party), in order to effect a purification of the system and of the element of life therein, which was also accomplished. The purpose of the second bowl was to impart the results thus obtained to the body of the beast; hence the purified system of doctrines and the element of life is here imparted to the sea, to the men standing upon this unstable element and worldly state organization. Consequently it

<sup>1</sup>James iii, 15.    <sup>2</sup>Jude 19.    <sup>3</sup>John i, 4.    <sup>4</sup>John v, 40.

represents by this practical execution, *the Reformation itself*.

HOW THIS PURIFIED ELEMENT OF LIFE WAS IMPARTED TO THE BODY OF THE BEAST OR WORLDLY MEN.—We have seen in the first bowl that a purification or reformation of the Church had become the watchword of all good and honest thinking men. Yet none of them intended thereby to bring forth a division in the body. No, they hated a division of the Church, and, therefore, wanted a reformation in harmony with the pope and the Church by a general council. However, many of the great and leading men did not want a reformation, but used every possible means to prevent it; so that after an earnest and extensive effort of more than two hundred years the words of the prophet proved themselves true to the case: “We would have healed Babylon, but she is not healed.”<sup>1</sup> Consequently, there remained for those who were active as living powers, one of two things: either to give up the idea of a reformation, or to endure the consequences. So Luther, Zwingli, Calvin, Knox, and others in their time simply did what those in the time before them had done. They continued to speak and to testify of the truth in Christ as God gave to each of them light, grace, and strength; and the time came when the Lord brought about a decision. In the time of Luther and Zwingli the desire for a reformation became general among the people, partly by the increasing visible evils, and partly by the activity of the existing powers of life. The decision came when the people accepted the teachings of the reformers. They did not separate themselves from the Church, but only from impurities and corruptions. Thus the purified doctrine and element of life went through the reformers and their co-workers into the sea of nations.

This step was in itself perfectly right and good, if

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<sup>1</sup> Jer. li, 9.

only these worldly-minded people had received this purified doctrine and element of life into their hearts with true repentance and faith. But, alas! repentance and faith did not exist in the great mass; hence the reception of the purified doctrine did not touch the heart of the great mass, but only their natural understanding. Nay, it is well known that though the reformers and their co-workers preached repentance and faith, and that they would have liked to see its effects in the hearts of the great mass, yet they did not unconditionally insist upon it, but were satisfied with a mere outward reception of their doctrine. They saw even in this an essential gain for the Reformation.

The fact lies clearly before us that wherever the Gospel is received, even in its purest form, without that new life from God, which it presents to man, the result can not be more than a Christianity, according to its outward form Scriptural, but in itself dead. The Gospel is here represented under the figure of "blood," which in the preceding bowl was purified from its surrounding corruptions, and now is imparted as a purified element of life to the sea of nations. It is thus likewise clear to us, from the manner in which the reformers imparted this element of life to these nations, and from the way in which the latter received it, that the result could not be other than as here symbolically represented: "It became blood as of a dead man." There was a Christianity formed which, in its outward nature and appearance, was indeed Scriptural, but was without life. It was only a Christianity in form and appearance. The Apocalyptic designation of the Reformation is, therefore, not directly flattering, but is it not true? Is it not to this day a true figure of Protestantism in general? It does not say that there was no life in the Reformation. On the contrary, it plainly indicates that life was present by the effective activity which was necessary to form a

sore—to separate the impurities from the system and drive them out. This activity of life must evidently have reached its highest stage just in the time of the Reformation; hence, was then also present in great power. However, the Apocalyptic designation of the Reformation has here chiefly reference to the results of the activity exercised, and how it succeeded in imparting the outward nature and appearance of the element of life to those nations, but not the life itself. The case was one true to nature. Hearts that persist in worldliness and impenitence can not in such a state receive more of Christianity than its outward form and appearance. Inwardly they remain dead, and are thus “as blood of a dead man.”

“And every living soul died.” That by these are not meant single souls believing in Christ, but living communities, appears from the reading of old manuscripts, and the last revision of the English Bible: “And every living soul died, [even] the things that were in the sea.” These comprise three classes:

1. Those living communities and associations within the corrupt Church, as “the Friends of God,” “the Brethren of the Common Life,” and others which by their vigorous activity helped to bring on the Reformation.

2. All living communities, which up to the Reformation were existing outside of the Church, as “the Waldenses, the Bohemian, and Moravian Brethren,” and others, which were persecuted by the Romish Church, and who believed they saw, in this great reformatory movement, the providence of God for the salvation of the Church. They therefore joined this mighty movement, but were consequently gradually overpowered by the prevailing formal Christianity into which the great mass of the Church of the reformers settled. This dead element which surrounded them on every side with its

form and appearance of life, together with the rest, ease, and safety they now enjoyed, was too much for them. The general prevailing spirit overpowered even those who once were wakeful and alive.

3. The communities which originated during the Reformation, and which at first and for a longer time showed real life. To these belong those numerous communities of Baptists, of which some not only showed no spiritual life, but even fell into gross errors; the great majority, however, gave evidence of spiritual life.

All these living things succumbed gradually to the influence of that element of the sea, which surrounded them in every direction, and which had become "blood as of a dead man." They all gradually lowered to a formal Christianity; understand well, as denominations, in the aggregate, a few single souls excepted. After this long continued action, followed a certain reaction. A close consideration of the conditions of this time will confirm the truth of this assertion. As all this, in spite of the natural causes, appears as the consequence of the outpouring of this second bowl of wrath, the question presents itself to us:

WHAT IS THEN THE REAL PURPOSE OF THIS BOWL?—Why was it, that all these different denominations, these living witnesses of evangelical truth had to die? Does then God kill his own witnesses? Not at all. God permitted this to happen in accordance with his unfathomable wisdom, and to the glorification of his name and work, as we may often see such ways of his, which for a time are unexplainable. In answer to the question proposed, we venture to say, that God permitted this to happen, because none of these communities was yet what he wanted it to be—fit for the purpose for which he would use it, and that none of them would in this position ever have been able to attain that fitness intended by God. They had first to go through another



school, and through another process of education. As after a long and dreary Winter the desired Spring finally arrives, and the trees are covered with blossoms, which, however, soon fall, causing sadness to those who can not see ahead, so is it here: "The Reformation has been, as it were, a time of blossoms, and the dying of these blossoms may seem to the man, not able to see into the future, a cause of sadness, supposing that now all these glorious things are lost. In reality this is not so; for in place of the fallen blossoms a very excellent fruit soon forms and ripens. Dying here, is not the final destruction of these communities, but is such a dying as is represented to us by baptism,<sup>1</sup> having for its consequence a most glorious resurrection. We shall see this resurrection in the third bowl reckoning from the present one.<sup>2</sup>

### THIRD BOWL.

REV. XVI, 4: "And the third poured out his bowl into the rivers and the fountains of the waters, and they became blood."

From a former explanation we know that "rivers" signify single nations, and "fountains of waters" doctrines, and "there came (or, they became) blood," signifies bloodshed—war. According to this, bloodshed among single nations is here indicated, in which doctrines are to be considered as the chief cause; hence, war concerning religion.

VERSES 5-7: "And I heard the angel of the waters saying, Righteous art thou, which art and which wast, thou Holy One, because thou didst thus judge: for they poured out the blood of saints and prophets, and blood hast thou given them to drink; they are worthy. And I heard the altar saying, Yea, O Lord God, the Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments."

Here is to be considered:

1. The angel, whom John hears speaking. This is

<sup>1</sup> Rom. vi, 4.

<sup>2</sup> See note 25.

no doubt he, who is appointed over the waters, *i. e.*, the nations to such a position as Michael assumes toward the people of God.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, this angel must have an accurate knowledge of the doings of these nations.

2. The judgment concerning this bloodshed.—1. From the angel. It indicates that God caused this war, and significantly designates God in this respect as “the Eternal”—he who is, and who was—as the Holy One, and a just Judge, who does not spare the guilty, but, according to the sowing of each, is also preparing a harvest, and, according to the measure meted, is measuring again. 2. From the altar comes a confirmation of this judgment of the angel: “Yea, O Lord God, the Almighty,” etc. In stating that the altar says this, in all probability this voice is the voice of those who a little later are represented as being under the altar, from which place their voices may be heard more clearly.<sup>2</sup> Here they express their approbation of this judgment of God.

3. The guilt of these nations is stated to be, “that they have poured out the blood of saints and prophets.” Saints are all, who by faith in Christ, have become partakers of his Spirit. Prophets are, in the New Covenant, all saints that testify of Jesus: For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.<sup>3</sup> As God often in the Old Covenant called unlearned men to be his prophets, so does he now in the New. There were but a very few of these prophets known, because, as a rule, only extraordinarily gifted men of God were considered as prophets, or such as actually prophesied in the generally accepted sense of the term. They all, whose blood was shed, were by the Church not acknowledged as saints, and still less as prophets, but as mean and detestable men, as heretics, sectarians, fanatics, and seducers. It might be possible that the great murderous crusade against the Albigenses (from 1209–1229) belongs here, though it

<sup>1</sup> Dan. x, 13, 21.

<sup>2</sup> Rev. vi, 10.

<sup>3</sup> Rev. xix, 10.

appears to be somewhat backward in time. Certainly the time here meant is that beginning with the first bowl, where God commences the special revivification of his work, and where, therefore, the enemy strenuously endeavors to hinder God's work, and to put God's living instruments by sword, fire, water, and other means of death out of the world. This is

4. The time in which these saints and prophets lived. To this time belongs evidently the time of the Inquisition, whose beginning is placed in the year 1229, and which searched out its innumerable victims as if by blood-hounds. Aside from these a few prominent names are known to us, as John Huss, Jerome, of Prague, Savonarola, etc., who, as prophets, sealed their testimony with their blood. In the second bowl martyrs were not wanting in the fields of the Reformation. Soon after the publication of the edict of Worms some Catholic princes began the persecution, Duke George, of Saxony, taking the lead. He treated the adherents of Luther with prison, the rod, and chasing, and had a seller of Luther's writings beheaded in the year 1521. The most severe persecution was in the Netherlands, in the hereditary provinces of the emperor, independent from the German Empire. Here the first blood of martyrs was shed in 1523, and also in Austria, in Bavaria, and in the district of the Suabian alliance, especially after the formation of the confederacy of Regensburg (1524). The insurrection of the peasants (1525) increased the rage of persecution. Under pretext of punishing the insurgents, the executioners of the confederates of Regensburg passed through the whole country, executing with the guilty thousands of innocent persons who were charged with no other crime than adherence to the Gospel. The dismissal of the diet at Speier furnished new fuel for the fire (1526). In Austria a Church visitation was instituted, almost like the one in Saxony, but only for the purpose of

finding out the heretics to punish them. In Bavaria the highways were watched to prevent the people from visiting foreign preachers. Those detected in this were first fined by the payment of a sum of money, but later were drowned in masses, or burnt.<sup>1</sup>

Still another class of martyrs is to be mentioned, known under the name of "Mennonites," and "Baptists." Of these it is said: "They have a genuine Netherlandic appearance, which is older than the Reformation, and, therefore, can in no way be confounded with the Protestantism of the sixteenth century; for it may be proven that the origin of the Baptists reaches into a far remote time, and is more venerable. Their existence in the Netherlands and in other places, even before the rise of the Anabaptists in Muenster, can not be doubted; and though they maintained for a time intercourse with the Anabaptists, yet Menno with his people dissolved all friendship with this fanatic sect, as soon as their real intentions became known to him. Not without good results has it been attempted, especially of late, to establish the relationship of the Baptists with the Waldenses. . . . The history of the Netherlandic Baptists, especially in the beginning, is written with blood and tears. Incessantly confounded with the fanatic faction of those at Muenster, they were in a most cruel manner persecuted by Catholics, as well as non-Catholics. Their Church has furnished a large number of martyrs for the cause of Christ."<sup>2</sup> "The course of the Baptists was so rapid that their doctrine soon penetrated the whole country, and they obtained many followers, baptizing many thousands. For they taught apparently nothing but love, faith, and [the] cross. They proved themselves patient and humble in many sufferings. They broke the bread together as a sign of unity and love,

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<sup>1</sup> J. H. Kurtz, vol. i.    <sup>2</sup> Dr. Herzog's Real Encyclopedia, vol. ix, p. 346.

helped each other faithfully by lending, borrowing, donating, and were taught to have all things in common, and called themselves 'brethren.' They increased so fast that the world was apprehensive of an insurrection from them, of which, however, they have ever been found guiltless. In many places men oppressed them with great tyranny. They were imprisoned, tortured with brand; sword, fire, water, and with many kinds of prisons, so that many were destroyed in a few years, some estimating the number killed in all places over two thousand. They suffered as martyrs patiently and firmly."<sup>1</sup> During the Spanish dominion in the Netherlands more than six thousand Mennonites suffered the death of martyrs, of which Van Braght's "*Blutiger Schauplatz oder Märtyrer Spiegel der Taufgesinnten*," gives a detailed and trustworthy account. If, to the countries already named, we add England, Spain, France, and Switzerland, the number of martyrs is largely increased. France may furnish the largest number of them, for many thousands of heroic Christians died there by sword and flame. Those murdered on the night of St. Bartholomew alone are estimated at over seventy thousand, and some estimate it at over one hundred thousand.<sup>2</sup>

5. The historical fulfillment of this bloodshed. Let us now simply and briefly mention the wars with which the nations indicated have been visited and by which our prophecy has been fulfilled.

1. In Switzerland, the wars of Kappel, 1529-1531.

2. In France, the five wars against this Kingdom (from 1525-1559) may be considered as a punishment for the persecutions which the adherents of the Reformation had to suffer from King Francis I, and from his

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<sup>1</sup>Sebast. Frank, Chron. fol. 193, cited by Dr. L. Keller, Geschichte der Wiedertäufer, Münster, 1880. <sup>2</sup>Dr. C. von Rotteck, vol. iii, p. 109.

son, Henry II. From that time the situation changes, and France forms a kind of anomaly—a deviation from the rule, according to which God visited the nations that shed the blood of his saints and prophets. For when the party professing the Gospel had in numbers and by the acquisition of persons of high standing become strong, seizing the sword they began thus to defend their cause and to meet their opponents. Then a great change occurred, and the reformed party hindered in this way their cause, so that God could not do for them as he had done to the enemies of other professors of his truth, who patiently suffered and left the judgment to the Lord. Nay, God would fulfill his Word: “All they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.” This came to pass. The papal party of France had concluded to eradicate heresy. Seeing no possibility of doing it openly, they decided to do it secretly and assassin-like, on the night of the 24th of August, 1572, and during the three following days, as stated above. Though they did not succeed in destroying all, yet from seventy to a hundred thousand were killed. France is, then, an exception, in that its blood-guiltiness is too horrible and too great to be punished like that of other nations. Now, as God neither visited the blood-guiltiness of Babylon the great immediately, but reserved it for a future time,<sup>1</sup> so may it be in regard to France. Its judgment shall follow, and will take place with the fall of Babylon, whose faithful and strong supporter it was for so long. However, on King Charles IX, who gave the order for this horrible murder, God’s judgment of our text verified itself in some degree, he being from that time constantly tormented with intense anguish of conscience, suffering from the peculiar disease of blood-sweating, and dying not quite two years later, in inconsolable despair (1574).

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<sup>1</sup> Rev. xviii, 7, 8.

3. In Germany, especially the Thirty Years' War, to which the Schmalcaldish war was a preceding indication, until out of the elements, where it had been secretly brooding, the terrible war broke forth.

4. In England, soon after the death of Henry VIII, 1547, when the terrors of ecclesiastic and civic dissension began to hover over the whole country, until the execution of Charles I, 1649, thus including the Irish massacre of 1641.

5. In Holland, the insurrection of the Netherlanders, and the terrible times following it from 1567-1609, and farther.

6. In Spain, its continual wars since the Reformation, and a gradual sinking to a secondary power.. Peoples of other countries suffered little, or only so far as they came in contact with the nations just mentioned. However, all nations of Europe were more or less affected by these wars. Here that declaration to John, at the indication of a new Division of our Period, comes in for its literal application and fulfillment: "Thou must prophesy again over many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings."<sup>1</sup> We are enabled to call all these many peoples, nations, tongues, and kings by name. The history of this terrible time of wars specifies them.

THE PURPOSE OF THIS BOWL.—This is, according to our text, to punish the nations for the shedding of the blood of the saints and the prophets. That this purpose has been accomplished by the wars just indicated, is proven abundantly by their history. That these were wars concerning religion, and that hence this third bowl was actually poured out into "the rivers"—*i. e.*, the nations—and into "the fountains of the waters"—*i. e.*, the religious doctrines—is equally manifest. Now, then, what was the primary cause of the contest, and what was

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<sup>1</sup> Rev. x, 11.

the final result or purpose gained by these bloody wars? The cause was this: the papal party believed it had the right, and considered it its duty to subject by force the Reformation party to the Church of Rome. The Reformation party believed it had the right, and considered it its duty to stand on the principles of the Reformation; hence the real cause of the contest was religious liberty. The Protestants demanded liberty of conscience, or religious liberty, and fought for it. The other party would not allow them such liberty, but demanded subjection to the Romish system. That was the whole matter about which these wars were raging. What was the final result? The Protestants were not conquered. The Romish party was compelled to let them have religious liberty. The peace concluded at Westphalia (1648) established for them such liberty. Thus, the sole purpose of these long, bloody, and devastating wars was to teach the professors of the name of Christ to be mutually forbearing; to esteem each other, to treat each other kindly, and to leave each inviolate and unhindered in the possession of his God-given rights. Depriving man of any such right is as wicked as robbing him of his property. So much blood and unspeakable misery did it cost to teach the nations and kings this lesson! Their blindness and egotism was so great that nothing short of such judgments could bring them to a better knowledge and nobler conceptions, and make them willing to grant to others the same rights and liberties which they claimed for themselves, as given by God. Hence though "progress" was very slow, it was not quite without fruit. In Germany, at least, a small advance was made. The peace of Augsburg, 1555, gave religious liberty only to the Confession of Augsburg; but the peace of Westphalia granted it also to the Reformed Church. That was all. That others should have the same divine rights was not thought of *then*. Some renewed lessons were first needed. Only



England learned better and faster, and a few years later gave religious liberty to all confessions.

#### FOURTH BOWL.

REV. XVI, 8: "And the fourth poured out his bowl upon the sun, and it was given unto it to scorch men with fire."

Christ is the Sun of righteousness, the light and life of the world. His believers who are partakers of his nature and Spirit possess, accordingly, this sun-nature. Christ dwells in those that are his. The Church is his body, the fullness of him, who filleth all in all. From this it plainly appears that the Church is meant here, and that chiefly in her sun-characteristic, the "moon" and the "stars" not being mentioned. Again, it is not that side of her sun-character called light which is here extraordinarily endowed, but that side called heat, with which it is given her to scorch men with fire. Indeed, "fire" also includes light, and the fire referred to by our text may to some extent strengthen the light. Still this fire is not described to us as working in the quality of light, but in the quality of heat. Thus, this new endowment of the Church of God is not to be considered a restoration of that third part of her light which was darkened in the preceding Division of our Period,<sup>1</sup> but it is an endowment of heat and fire, the effect of which is scorching and withering.<sup>2</sup> The full signification of it is given by the Scripture. Jesus calls that power of the Spirit brought through him into the world "a fire:" "I am come to send fire on the earth," etc. The Holy Spirit appeared on the day of Pentecost as cloven tongues like as of fire, on each of the disciples.<sup>3</sup> This Spirit that animates the Church of God is described as "fervent"<sup>4</sup> or warm, that may be subdued to lukewarmness,<sup>5</sup> but also increased to a scorching heat, as stated in our text.

<sup>1</sup> Rev. viii, 12.    <sup>2</sup> Matt. xiii, 6; Mark iv, 6.    <sup>3</sup> Acts ii, 3.  
<sup>4</sup> Rom. xii, 11; Acts xviii, 25.    <sup>5</sup> Rev. iii, 16.

What is here indicated is the kindling and increasing of the warmth of the Church of God, and her endowment to an unusual extent with the power of the Spirit from on high. How the Church made use of this new endowment is stated in

VERSE 9: "And men were scorched with great heat: and they blasphemed the name of the God which hath power over these plagues; and they repented not to give him glory."

The extraordinary degree of this heat appears here, by being called great, and destined as a plague for these men. This, then, also explains what kind of men are meant—viz., those not yet believing, and whom God intends to lead, by this heat, to repentance and faith, but without avail, for on the contrary they blaspheme the name of God. The "name of God" represents God himself and every thing emanating from him to men. Blaspheming the name of God, is to blaspheme his revealed truths and graces. These men did not change their minds, accept these gifts of God, and honor him with obedience, praise, and thanksgiving.

Now, as according to the law of four, the fourth stage is the intended result of the three preceding ones, and makes the four together a whole by itself, we see how the work, begun in the first bowl by effective powers of life, and further carried on in the second and third bowls, is here brought to completion. It plainly stands before us as an extraordinary revivification of the Church of God by the warmth and fiery power of the Holy Spirit. This is the true character of the whole work, and this signification comes forth in the full light in this fourth bowl.

#### THE FULFILLMENT OF THIS PROPHECY BY HISTORY.

1. The revivification of the various denominations. Let us introduce them according to the countries. In

the second bowl we intimated that the various living communities which were in the sea and died, only died to arise anew and more glorious. This applies to all of the formerly existing communities—to the Lutherans, Reformed, Episcopalians, Baptists, etc. Here, so far as there is life in them, they arise in a new spirit of life, in a spirit of warmth and fiery power to an unusual degree.

The beginning of the fourth bowl is, perhaps, to be set towards the close of the Thirty Years' War, to about 1645. The first incitations of it are seen in England, where we also saw the first evident effects of the first bowl. The Reformation had taken a peculiar course, by being managed too much by kingly power, and retaining many things too closely allied to the Romish Church. Against this a strong party was formed by the people, called Non-conformists and Puritans, because they refused to conform to the established doctrines of the State Church, and demanded a full purification of the Church from all its unscriptural doctrines. They were not mere external zealots, but were really animated by the holy fire of the Spirit of God. We have no room to enter here into the particulars of the origin of these various denominations. Suffice it to say, that out of the vast number of these Non-conformists new societies were forming, which, in regard to those that died in the second bowl, appear as corporations renewed and risen again. So, for instance, the Baptists compared with the former Anabaptist; and so also the Presbyterians and Congregationalists compared with the original Reformed. So was the community of Methodists, arising a little later, nothing more than the Episcopal Church renewed by the warming or heat-power of the Holy Spirit, for John Wesley, the founder of the Methodists, was a minister of the Episcopal Church, and never actually separated himself from it. He did not undertake a reformation of this Church in its doctrines and ordinances, but his pur-

pose was simply to bring life and spirit into it. The Episcopal Church itself was later, to a certain extent, seized by the newly-kindled flames of the holy fire. There were, moreover, other new corporations arising into existence, animated by the same spirit of life. The society called the Evangelical Association assumes a position similar to that of the Methodists, it being in doctrine, zeal, and activity very similar to the latter, though it arose later, and is of German-American origin. As a body, it is the general Evangelical Church revived and renewed by the Holy Spirit of God.

Of all denominations in which the effects of this fourth bowl became manifest, there is none in which the real nature of this bowl is expressed in such a high degree as in the Methodists. A Christianity, penetrated by the fire of the Spirit of God, to make its warmth effective upon men in an extraordinary degree is the main object, sum and substance of this denomination. To this every thing else is subordinated. By no other figure could Methodism more thoughtfully, profoundly, and more faithfully be represented than by that given in the text—of the fire and heat of the sun—to unfold a glowing zeal of conversion to an extraordinary degree, in order to kindle spiritual life in men, to make it hot for them. Whatever fault may be found with the Methodists, it can not be contradicted that they have been, and still are, a mighty lever for the furtherance of living Christianity in our times. Moreover, the doctrine of sanctification, so often misunderstood, revived by John Wesley, is a very essential characteristic belonging to this fourth bowl. It is, indeed, the height and degree of that heat of the sun to which all disciples of Christ should attain. To this we are called. The general spreading of the cause of holiness in our times is, no doubt, a fact which God intends to represent by the figure of our text.

In Germany we see this new movement of revival in the State Church begin through the activity of such men as Ph. Jacob Spener (1666), A. Herman Francke, and others. It was no small struggle, for the great mass of formal Christians considered the new movement of the Spirit as a kind of fanaticism. However, the new life established itself, and its power of heat could not be subdued by any resistance. The community of the Bohemian and Moravian Brethren came, under the direction of the Count von Zinzendorf, animated with a new spirit and a new life, to the scene of Christian activity. In Holland, Switzerland, France, and other countries, similar revivals originated, where those attaining to new life in Christ remained partly connected with the State Church, and partly formed communities of their own. Holland had the advantage of coming early into contact with religious movements in England, as many of those persecuted in England sought refuge in Holland. All of the present unusually energetic and active life, which has more or less taken hold of all Christian denominations, is to be ascribed to the effects of this fourth bowl that has been poured out upon the sun-character of the Church of God. Wherever there are souls belonging to the Church of God, there is also a manifestation of this divine fire in different degrees of innate heat. Hence, even in the Romish Church such life began to stir, as, for instance in Jansenism and Quietism; and where it was not stirring, writings, colporteurs, and missionaries from living corporations were entering the fields to kindle this holy fire. Into the time of this vial belongs also the foundation of a new nation and of a great and powerful republic.

The United States of North America.—The first settlers, and many of those following them, left their homes inspired by that fire of the newly revived Church of God in order to serve God in the new world unmolested and

in harmony with their own convictions. The spirit of new life that animated these peoples and operated through them on others, has impressed on this whole country the character of this fourth bowl. It became a country of religious and civil liberty (the latter growing out of the former), yea, a country of extraordinary religious development, where that principle has its full force: "To render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's." The Church is not bound by fetters and chains of the State, but stands on her own original ground, separated from the state, and by means of this liberty exercises a much more powerful influence, and promotes more successfully the unfolding of this new life and the growth of living societies.

However, all this only designates the various bodies in which, during this time, the intensified divine heat of the sun became manifest. How they send forth this power, and cause it to operate upon men, remains yet to be stated. We will, then, briefly name the general means employed for this purpose. Consider :

1. The numerous Bible societies which came into existence during this time, and whose object is to print and circulate the Holy Scriptures. More than a million Bibles are printed yearly ; hence, more than 19,000 each week, more than 3,000 every day, 300 every hour, or 5 every minute of working time ; and in more than 200 different languages.

2. The mission societies for the conversion of the heathen, of which almost every denomination has one or several, and by which the Gospel has been preached to all nations. Of these England had in 1876, 21 ; Germany, Switzerland, Holland, Norway, Italy, France, and Denmark, together, 17 ; North America, 16 ; local, or the heathen world itself, 4 ; together, 58.

3. Home missions among Catholics, Protestants, and

Jews, to bring the enlivening power of the sun and to plant the true Christian life among them.

4. The Sunday-schools—these important and flourishing nurseries of the Church of God, where the seed of life is sowed into the tender hearts of the young.

5. Publication societies—the publishing of books and pamphlets of Christian contents for the dissemination of divine truths on all imaginable subjects, doctrinal, devotional, and educational; together with numerous journals and papers for grown people and children. What a powerful means the press is for the dissemination of ideas among men!

6. Colportage, or the propagation of Bibles, books, and writings, by Christian peddlers, able to say a word of evangelical instruction themselves; also selling their books cheap, often—under circumstances—even giving them away; who have free access everywhere, where often a preacher or an evangelist would not be allowed to show himself, and who thus bring the burning truths of the Gospel into the dwellings and workshops of the people. Thus the power of the divine sun penetrates the most hidden places.

7. The coming forward of evangelists as a special office of the New Testament, known and active in the times of the apostles; but in the true sense of the Scripture, and with increased strength, reappearing in our time.

8. Camp-meetings, preaching in the open air and in the streets, belong to the means of the unfolding of that extraordinary heat of the sun.

9. Benevolent institutions like those of August Herman Francke, in Halle, George Müller, in Bristol, England, Dr. Wichern in Hamburg, and others. These are proofs of the power of Christianity before whose scorching heat boasting infidelity with its mere superficial roots is soon put to shame and withers.

10. Institutions of deaconesses, like the one in Kaiserswerth with its filial institutes in Germany, Italy, and in the East. Again, associations for the salvation of fallen women, where the love of Christ reaches down to the lowest. Besides these many other societies, associations (like the Young Men's Christian Associations), and other institutions, whose number is constantly on the increase, prove themselves actual evidences of the extraordinary power of the spirit of Christianity.

11. Also, the changed position of the female members in living Churches, who formerly, because of certain passages of Scripture, were denied the right of taking an active part in the meetings of the Church, they being condemned to keep silence, are now to a great extent no longer differing in this regard from the male membership, for they not only pray and speak, but some even teach and preach. This is a manifest sign of the times,<sup>1</sup> belonging to the extraordinary activity of this bowl. It is strictly taken against the order confirmed by the apostles, but not against the extraordinary unfolding of power and activity of the Church, ordered by God for these times.

12. The endeavor to bring forth the full power of the Word of God.—To this belong the efforts made to bring to light the old sacred manuscripts, and to prove and classify them. Also the fact, that preachers and others are no longer satisfied with defective translations, but reach after the genuine power of God's word, giving the meaning of that word with the most faithful accuracy. Again, the close study of that word in Sunday-schools, as also in exegesis by preaching and writing in general, is a manifestation of that fire-heat of our text. In the same manner the more careful, profound, and practical preparation of sermons by preachers of our times is another way of bringing forth the full power of

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<sup>1</sup> Joel ii, 28, 29.



the Word of God. Sermons prayerfully prepared, fortified by the pure and living Word of God, and delivered in a spirit adequate to its contents, are an effectual means of scorching men with fire.

13. The reappearing, or coming into general publicity of the gift of healing by the prayer of faith,<sup>1</sup> as it was seen in pastor Christoph Blumhardt, in Moettlingen, Wirtemberg, and is still continuing under his successor. The same healing power was manifest in Dorothea Trudel, in Maennedorf, Canton Zurich, Switzerland, and continues under her successor. It also manifests itself in a similar way in our own country, in Dr. Cullis, of Boston. All these manifestations belong evidently to the effect of the fourth bowl. The extraordinary heat of the sun makes itself perceptible in this province of Christian efficacy.

14. All the other numerous means which time may yet reveal for the unfolding of its extraordinary heat, can not beforehand be stated. It is possible that among the many good means such also may introduce themselves as go too far, and consequently must fill the hearts of earnest Christians with no little solicitude. Features of this kind seemed to many to manifest themselves in the last phase, called, "Salvation Army," but whatever may come, the Lord is among his people, and he will preserve his work.

Now, taking all these powers together, many of which formerly did not even exist, or were only active in a subordinate degree, what an immense activity is unfolded! In such an active and successful condition, the Church of God has never before been found. This activity is still on the increase. For, as we have seen that the efficacy of the fourth seal and of the fourth trumpet reached to the seventh, so, also, according to the law of four, does the power of this fourth bowl extend itself to

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<sup>1</sup> James v, 15.

the seventh, yea, to the coming of the Lord. It is sad that men in spite of these mighty and glorious unfoldings of Christianity are not brought to a change of mind and heart, and to give glory to God, but even blaspheme his name.

IN THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS PROGRESS.—This fourth bowl teaches us that there is progress in the kingdom of God, and how necessary it is to observe this progress rightly. He who would have stopped at the first or second bowl, would have made as great a mistake as the Jews made when Christ came, and they still clung to Moses. The Holy Spirit will guide those who believe, not only into some truth, but into all the truth.<sup>1</sup>

THE PURPOSE OF THIS BOWL.—This is, on the one hand, the glorification of the work of God on earth, and on the other hand, also, that the Church of God may be able to resist the coming and exceeding powerful corruption of the antichrist. This is, as we see the Fourth Division of our Period, where the adversary undertakes, and actually carries out, the unfolding of death.<sup>2</sup> Death personified on the pale horse, with Hades following him, appears here on the scene of action. He was permitted, as far as it served God's purpose, to carry out his work of death already in the second and third bowls, but his greater doings are still to come. As the Church of God has now begun to unfold in such an extraordinary manner her divine power and glory before the world or adherents of the beast, to their great vexation, it is to be expected, that the adversary likewise shall unfold his power and horrible nature through the beast, as soon as the latter has an opportunity and is ready. This is, then, what we presently shall see; for the next bowl attacks this opponent of the Church, the Lord having given him opportunity.

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<sup>1</sup> John xvi, 13.    <sup>2</sup> Rev. vi, 8.

## FIFTH BOWL.

REV. XVI, 10: "And the fifth poured out his bowl upon the throne of the beast."

The beast, as we have seen, has a body as well as a soul. The body is on earth, and all worldly-minded men belong to it. Of the soul, it is said, that it is yet in the abyss, but shall toward the end of our Period, come up out of the abyss, and be for a short time—until the coming of the Lord—present on earth. Now, as the beast has its kingdom on earth, it also must have a chief residence or throne, from which its dominion goes forth over the earth, as Pergamos was designated as Satan's throne, because his influence went chiefly out from that place into the world and into the Churches. This bowl being now poured upon the throne of the beast surely means its chief residence or capital. That its seat in the abyss may be affected not a little by this bowl seems probable, though it is chiefly intended for its throne on earth.

"And his kingdom was darkened."—As this kingdom is already darkness in itself, a further darkening of it must, first, have reference to that which had hitherto still in part been light. Secondly, there may be meant an increase, or thickening of the darkness itself. It doubtless means both; hence, we would have here a representation of the system of the beast—of its principles and practices—not in their ordinary, but rather extraordinary aspect, *i. e.*, in an increased and excessive degree. As the bowl, poured out upon the sun effected an extraordinary unfolding of power in the Church of God, so by this bowl room is given to the beast to make an extraordinary display of its own real nature.

"And they gnawed their tongues."—The tongue is the organ of speech. According to the Scriptures men confess, speak, and proclaim with the tongue. It is a little member, but may be the cause of great things,

especially if, as James says, it is set on fire by hell. This is, doubtless, the case in our text, as these tongues here were inspired, hence, also, set on fire, by the beast from the abyss. It is said of the beast that it also speaks, yea, that it has a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, which of course it does through men who are its adherents. These are the mouth-piece of the beast. Now, if the tongue is the organ of speech,<sup>1</sup> then the expression, "their tongues," would refer to those organs of speech of the beast active in its darkened kingdom; and "to gnaw," or better, "to bite, chew," would indicate that the adherents of the beast bit their own speakers and leaders. Certain beasts do not wait long, especially when they are vexed or excited, they bite any one coming near. The Scriptures compare the wicked frequently to such animals as make this use of their teeth.<sup>2</sup>

"For pain."—This term is to be understood in the sense of labor, toilsome effort. Such is the meaning of the original. The effect of this bowl of wrath placed these men in such exceeding great labor, that because of it, and because of their relentless energy in it, they bit their own organs of speech or speakers. The zeal displayed in their toiling efforts outweighed by far their earnestness and circumspection.

VERSE 11: "And they blasphemed the God of heaven, because of their pains."

"The God of heaven" in opposition to gods which men on earth make for themselves. Here they blaspheme not only the "name of God," but God himself, because they were in such a labyrinth of trouble. "And because of their sores" they also blasphemed him. This is a point in which this bowl resembles the first. As a purification and reformation was going on, it may be accepted that here a similar movement is indicated.

<sup>1</sup> Psa. lv, 9.    <sup>2</sup> Psa. iii, 7; lvii, 4; lviii, 6.

As that in the body of the false prophet (among the men of his Church) was a religious purification, so must the one of this fifth bowl be a political one. That there is here a plurality of sores, shows that the impurities were driven out of this beastly body in more ways than one. They must have tried many other ways, one after another, or several at once, hence, the toilsome efforts. God's purpose was not only to bring about a political reformation, but also to lead those men to repentance. "But they repented not of their works."

#### A RÉSUMÉ OF THESE ELUCIDATED POINTS.

I. The subject of this bowl is the throne of the beast, not directly the beast itself in person. By this is designated a certain place on earth, where the beast has its seat or throne, and from which it exercises its influence over its kingdom.

II. The event here indicated is a darkening of the kingdom of the beast, and, hence, implies: 1. That light, hitherto existing in the system of this kingdom, has been put out of it. 2. That the darkness, naturally belonging to this system, has not only been retained as its sole principle, but has been intensified. 3. That this system of increased darkness has been propagated from the throne through the whole kingdom.

III. This darkening places the adherents of the beast, especially at the throne, in exceeding great labor, so that from the greatness of this labor they bit their own speakers and leaders; and because of their labors they blasphemed God.

IV. In spite of the fact that this event is a darkening, it is also a reformation for the body or corporation of the beast, however, not a reformation like the one in the sixteenth century, where one general purification seemed sufficient, but one, where different attempts at it were

made in succession. There is here not only one sore, but a plurality of them.

V. God's purpose to lead the adherents of the beast by these trials to repentance was not accomplished.

#### THE HISTORICAL FULFILLMENT OF THESE THINGS.

I. Where do we find the throne of the beast? It can only be within that nation which at that time was ahead of all others in worldly-mindedness and worldly aspirations, taking the lead therein, and exercising by this a kind of ruling influence over all other nations. Such a nation were the French, and accordingly the throne of the beast would be Paris. It was chiefly since the times of Louis XIV that France assumed such a position. The French language became the language of all the courts of Europe and of educated men. French manners and plays found an entrance everywhere, and even in dress the fashions of Paris were closely imitated by the higher and common classes of both sexes throughout almost the whole civilized world. Politically, France has also exercised a vast influence. Should all this not have made it the throne of the beast—the first and leading power in the political development of the world? Then it became so by the outpouring of this fifth bowl, and by that mighty historical event brought forth in its capital and kingdom by this bowl.

II. What event was, then, this darkening? We answer: the French Revolution of 1789. Here all the historical facts perfectly agree with all the figures and significations of our prophecy. First, as will be seen, in regard to time, taking place after the fourth bowl. Second, in regard to its general character, taking place in the world, or the kingdom of the beast; and, indeed, in extent, influence, and signification the greatest revolution which ever occurred in the development of the worldly kingdom. Thirdly, it also agrees in its details.

1. The hitherto existing light in the system of this kingdom was put out of it. As a rule all revolutions intend to abolish existing evils in the system of the government, so was it also in the French Revolution. The evils were many and grave, and the people had borne them for a long time. It seemed very hard at the beginning that the king, as unlimited master of France, should yield to the requests of the people, yet he did it. Thus a very essential part of existing evils was abolished, for which the nation was grateful. Now, if they had limited their abolition simply to real evils, all would have been well; but the people and their representatives, or speakers, encouraged by their success, continued making requests which implied not only the abolition of real evils, but essential, good things. The spirit of revolution showed itself bolder and bolder; and, once set agoing, could not possibly rest until every thing conformed to its idea. So religion was finally attacked and abolished as a system incompatible with this spirit of revolution. Even the acknowledgment of a Higher Being was abolished. So decided and radical were they in the putting away of all divine and religious things, that all institutions and things which stood in any relation to the divine light, or which by their existence brought divine light into remembrance, were without exception abolished. In order that the Lord's day—Sunday—be wiped out and its memory cut off, there was introduced, instead of a week of seven days, one of ten days, called a decade. The days and months received new names, and the years were no longer counted from the birth of Christ, but from the beginning of the republic. Thus was here every spark of light still existing in the system of the beast put out, and the kingdom from this side darkened. We also see here

2. How the darkness, naturally belonging to this system, was not only retained as its sole principle, but much

increased. Into what corruption and darkness man plunges himself, when he rejects God, became manifest here. After every thing divine was abolished, there was established by a resolution on November 7, 1793, what they called "the service of reason," where, as the emblem of it, prostitutes were placed upon the altar.<sup>1</sup> Hence what the Scripture calls darkness, and which our prophecy represents as rather an uncommon—*i. e.*, a much increased and intensified—darkness, may be perceived from the dreadfully corrupt condition which must have existed. "Darkness" implies evidently the signification of confusion in man's intellect and ways of action. The special proofs for this increased darkness we shall soon find in the historical illustration of "pains." We see

3. How the propagation of this darkened system emanated from the throne. First in France itself with power and great shedding of blood, but also into all other countries did the news penetrate; and afterward the armies of Napoleon propagated this new political doctrine in all the countries of Europe, even in Egypt and Palestine, hence in the most essential parts of the beast's kingdom.

III. A look at the pains or labors in this darkening. It takes a great effort to start a revolution, and France was no exception in this. However, the efforts needed to start it are doubtless not the ones, or in any case the least of those meant by our text. Much greater efforts appear later, when an opposition arose to the revolution, consisting, first, of the nobility and the priests, and this at a time when nothing had happened to which the king himself had not consented. "The abolition of titles and ribbons (July 30, 1790) had kindled the wrath of the aristocrats. Their utterances increased the hatred of the commoners.

"Not only among the people, but also in the army,

<sup>1</sup> C. v. Rotteck, vol. iv, p. 66.



were outbreaks. A general fermentation showed itself among the land forces as well as in the navy. Many officers—afraid of the newly awakened spirit of the commoners—emigrated. Great numbers of the nobility of the country secretly withdrew before this. The abolition of the parliaments also had increased the number of emigrants, and by the example of the princes the court was almost deserted.

“These emigrants took up arms at several points on the frontier, more frequently in Coblenz, where the count of Artois had established his seat. Also around Worms and at Ettenheim corps of warriors were formed of emigrants. Keeping up close correspondence with their friends or servants remaining at home, they threw from their positions fire-brands into the kingdom, by intrigues, bribery, and various insurrections of the people; while the ambassadors of the princes summoned all the monarchs of Europe to protect the cause of the kingship (for so the aristocracy named its cause) against the swelling torrent of the revolution. The prince of Artois was personally traveling from place to place to further the success of such negotiations.

“Equally hostile to the new order of things were the priests, since a decree of the National Assembly had regulated their civil constitution (June 12, 1790). They believed that the decree of the National Assembly was encroaching on the sovereignty of the pope, on the glory of the Church, and considered their consciences burdened by the required oath of fidelity to the nation, law, king, and constitution. Thus they boldly refused to take the oath, and stirred up the simple ones among the people against the public authority, and against the new constitution. The holy father approved the refusal (1791, April 13th), declaring all priests who had submitted to civil oath as having forfeited their office, thus throwing by this bull civil war into the innermost parts of the

country. For the priests, refusing the oath, were as preachers, confessors, family friends, or intrusive exhorters, pouring hatred into the souls of the general populace against the wicked National Assembly, and against the whole new order of things. In the name of God, and as a sacred duty of conscience, they demanded from their stupidly believing auditors resistance and rebellion against the existing authority, or secret preparation of arms for a murderous civil war.”<sup>1</sup> “From Coblenz, where the emigrants had gathered, the negotiations were ardently continued, and that with good success. At Vienna and at Berlin the sentiments of Coblenz prevailed. Other courts also shared the same. An ambassador from Petersburg appeared in Coblenz. After the failure of the flight of the king, the number of emigrants increased in such a measure that toward the end of the year 1791 sixty thousand of them were standing, mostly armed, in the Rhenish and Netherlandic provinces.”<sup>2</sup> Finally the war came. Austria and Prussia arose against France. “The great Prussic-Austrian army was commanded by the highly renowned general, regent duke C. W. Ferdinand of Brunswick. The king of Prussia and his two oldest princes followed the army personally. The martial forces of all the allies together (among whom were many regent princes, also Sardinians, and including twenty thousand emigrants), were reckoned at two hundred thousand men. Proud of this force, the duke of Brunswick marched from Luxemburg into France (August 19, 1792), conquering speedily the fortresses Longroy and Verdun, and boldly pursuing the direction toward Paris.”<sup>3</sup> This was no small addition of labor for France, which had already enough to do for itself, and would under such circumstances have discouraged many a people. In the French it stirred the fire of revolution

<sup>1</sup> Rotteck, vol. iv, pp. 36, 37.    <sup>2</sup> Rotteck, p. 42.    <sup>3</sup> Rotteck, pp. 47, 48.

only more vehemently, and they met their intruding enemies with courage and decision. "Already on the 23d of October the thunder of cannon along the whole frontier proclaimed that the land of liberty was cleared from the servants of the despots."<sup>1</sup>

With this intervention of foreign powers, those pains or labors begin to appear, in consequence of which they bit their tongues. The tenor of the declaration of war of these powers and emigrated princes made all those hitherto still wavering, determined; all the lukewarm, glowing; and those already warm, glowing beyond measure. "The terrors of mob dominion enter the scene. The law-giving assembly obeyed tremblingly the newly established municipality of Paris, and in this were blood-thirsty fanatics, like Robespierre and Marat, the great speakers. A new blood-tribunal was established in place of the national court of justice of Orleans, which seemed too mild. The guillotine was declared permanent. The king was led off into the prison of the temple tower with his family and a few servants allowed him (August 13th). Many thousand persons, ostensibly suspected, were thrown into prison or secured in churches, where a furious Jacobin rabble, mostly of the Marseilles band, butchered them like cannibals unhindered by the authorities (September 2-7). About five thousand were thus horribly murdered, among them the innocent princess of Lamballe and the count of Montmorin, three dukes of La Rochefoucault, and many others of the nobility. Emissaries also set out for other cities to rouse (men) to like horrors. The reports of the advance of the Prussians had for the most part kindled this rage. Many members of the law-giving assembly saw themselves menaced with the murderous instrument."<sup>2</sup> The king himself was executed (January 21, 1792); and now were not only the organs of speech or representatives of the

<sup>1</sup> Rotteck, vol. iv, p. 49.

<sup>2</sup> Rotteck, vol. iv, p. 51.

people threatened with the murderous instrument, but hit with it. "In the days from May 27th to June 2d, such mournful catastrophes took place. The sections of the capital, *i. e.*, the bands of the rabble, arose in arms, establishing new city authorities, placing Henriot, one of the murderers of that September [butchery] at their head, and moving against the convent, demanded the proscription of twenty-two heads of the Gironde,\* and also a reduction of the price of bread. Still more fearfully was the storm renewed on the following days. The representatives of the nation saw themselves exposed to deeds of violence from the rabble. The traitors in their own midst prevented every worthy resolution. The mutineers, directing the guns toward the convent, insisted on the proscription of the Girondists. Thus, after a few impotent attempts at deliverance, the assembly resolved to arrest thirty-four of their members—mostly Girondists, and with them some neutral, yet candid men—by which the insurrection was quenched. Against this decree seventy-three of the better-minded members of the convent afterward protested, whereupon the order of arrest was also applied to them. From those proscribed, some saved themselves by hiding, some by flight. . . . Several committed suicide, or fell separately into the hands of their enemies or into those of the executioner. . . . The rest, twenty-one in number, languished in the wearisome prison, until finally the formal decree of accusation came up against them, and, on October 31st, the guillotine ended their sufferings. . . . The exasperation of the people against its combined enemy abroad and at home, rose, according to the inflammable character of this nation, even to madness, and once unchained, the demon of blood-thirstiness proceeded irrepressibly onward. Many, from innate savageness, many, however, from fanatic blindness,

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\* Noble-minded republicans.

supposing to serve therewith the country, murdered and demanded murder. There was scarcely any choice left but to be executioner or victim.”<sup>1</sup>

“A horrible law now gave up the suspected persons—according to the unlimited extent of this term—to the tribunals of the Revolution. There were also appointed, in all communities of the country, revolutionary committees, which carefully spied out such suspected persons and delivered them to the prison or to the guillotine. A special revolutionary army, first formed at Paris, and then also in the provinces, out of the maddest ‘*Sansculottes*,’ passed through the bleeding country, carrying with them a guillotine. Shortly after, this murdering instrument was declared permanent. Day after day—vying with each other in activity—did the tribunals of the Revolution send in their victims. Not less than eighteen months did such unheard of tyranny continue. During this time there died, according to a strictly established calculation, over one million men by the hand of the murderers and executioners. A similar number was devoured by the war. How many had pined away in affliction and misery, was not counted.

“Among the more touching of the sad scenes of these terrible times belongs the execution of Marie Antoinette. She, once the sovereign queen of France, Maria Theresa’s daughter, sister of two emperors, and aunt of a living emperor, after having languished many months in prison, was finally dragged before the judges of blood, tormented by unspeakably ill treatment, after a short trial condemned, and carried on a cart to the place of execution (October 16, 1792). The innocent princess, Elizabeth, sister of Louis XVI, too, atoned for the misfortune of her name under the ax of the executioner (May 10, 1794). Before this her unworthy kinsman, the criminal duke of Orleans had suffered the thousand-fold deserved

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<sup>1</sup> Rotteck, vol. iv, pp. 54, 55.

punishment by the guillotine (November 6, 1793); but the wretched prince, called outside of France Louis XVII, pined slowly away in the temple prison (June 18, 1795).

"However, not only princes and royalists, or men suspected of such persuasion, but even acknowledged friends of the Revolution—partly opponents of terrorism, partly terrorists themselves—in still larger numbers were killed by the men of terror, and finally the party of the mountain was raging against itself."<sup>1</sup> (This was the name of the party opposing the Girondists.)

Still more labors. Besides all this darkening and labor with which these men were visited, and in which, out of sheer zeal in their cause, they bit their own representatives, and even a large number of men of their own political persuasion, there were still other pains coming on them. A part of them they assumed by choice; the others, and really all, grew out of the Revolution. Among the first belong the conquest of Savoy (1792), the invasion of Germany by Custine, Dumouriez's expedition into Belgium, the battle at Jemappe, his wars and total defeat in Holland. To the others belong the wars following with England, Holland, and Spain, for which the convent ordered the increase of the martial force to five hundred thousand men. Then came the civil war, which was by far more perilous than all the enemies outside, and which was raging at the same time in the South, in the North, and West. In the West was the Vendee, raising her head in favor of royalty and the old prerogative of the priesthood and the nobility. In the North and South the departments friendly to the Gironde were fighting against the conquering party, and, since the revolution of May 31st, against the tyrannically domineering party of the mountain. The heaviest storm gathered itself in the Vendee, a department lying in the

<sup>1</sup> Rotteck, vol. iv, pp. 64, 65.

former province Pitou, whose fire communicated itself quickly to all surrounding departments. Already within one month there were forty thousand men, and three months later one hundred and twenty thousand fanatics in arms, to whose impetuosity and contempt of death, the republican armies succumbed in many bloody battles. With the battle-cry "*Vive Louis XVII! Vive Jesus Christ!*" the royal-Christian or Catholic army, as the multitude called itself, rushed upon the soldiers of the republic, and appeared unconquerable in their native country, whose marshes, canals, forests, and hills hindered every step of the enemy. After several defeats, which the republican generals Biron, Westerman and others experienced, the population around the Vendee was finally summoned *en masse*, and the garrison of Mainz sent for their reinforcement. The republican generals entered the unhappy country from all sides amidst the most terrible devastations. The convent had decreed the extermination of the Vendee within twenty days. At Chollet was the battle of decision. It was already half won for the Vendean, when their noble leaders, D'Elbée and Beauchamp, fell. Then terror seized their combatants, and the republic celebrated their most bloody triumph. Humanity was shocked at the horrors which followed. The whole population of the Vendee was proscribed by the convent. With the rage of tigers, its generals executed the dreadful ban. Children, old men and women were slaughtered, and desolation marked the path of the victors.<sup>1</sup> To this is further to be added the whole remaining time of the republic to Napoleon I; and, finally, all the wars under Napoleon until his banishment to the isle of St. Helena (1815). Only with the restoration of the kingdom under Louis XVIII, the brother of the executed Louis XVI, did the French Revolution reach its close. Who is able to describe, or even to

<sup>1</sup> Rotteck, vol. iv, pp. 60-62.

conceive fully, all the pain which France brought on herself, the effects of which were consequently felt throughout the entire kingdom of the beast?

IV. How this event, though in itself a darkening of the kingdom of the beast, was nevertheless a certain reformation, is indicated by the sores here mentioned. These, as we have seen, are a means through which the impure matter finds an outlet, and is thus thrown out of the body. Here, too, such a purification took place in the political body and system of the beast; a purification, however, according to the beast's own notions and principles. There were many and great evils abolished. Chiefly, because they abolished with them all the divine light hitherto existing in that system, did this darkening, confusion, and indescribable labor come upon them. The Reformation of the sixteenth century formed only one sore, and when that had discharged the impure matter, they were satisfied with the result thus obtained, and demanded no second reformation. In the French Revolution it was different. They made several different attempts to relieve the body from what they thought to be infesting evils, and were not satisfied with any of these attempts. First they formed out of an autocracy a constitutional kingdom. Then they tried it with the republic. This again had to make room for another form of government—for the directory; this had to make room for the consulate; this for the empire; and finally they came back again to the royal form of government. Each of these attempts proved itself a sore; for so long as the beastly power of life—incited by the unseen power of the abyss—was active in the body, fighting against these supposed evils, and driving them out of the body, it could not be otherwise than that these various systems of government should prove themselves to be suppurating wounds or sores. This was the chief reason why these men were so greatly excited, as is stated :



V. "And they blasphemed the God of heaven, because of their pains and their sores; and they repented not of their works."

The great and frightful blasphemies during the Revolution and later in France, are too well known to need further mention, and "that they repented not of their works," but that this worldly and infidel sentiment is in France, and throughout the kingdom of the beast still active, is likewise clear to the observer.

#### GENERAL CHARACTER OF THIS EVENT.

1. From the political point of view.—"There is no greater event in the history of the world than the French Revolution. There is hardly one equally great. The foundation and the downfall of the old kingdoms of the world have, indeed, caused a vast deal of noise, and their effect has been far extending, and even determining for future times. They were brought forth more by physical powers than by those of the spirit; and, if in some degree by the latter, yet only by the power of intellect, and in the interest of common greed of spoil, glory, or dominion; not by moral motives, not by the power of ideas. . . . The French Revolution, on the contrary, suddenly and most powerfully shook that part of the world on which it was born. It flung its thunders into all the remaining parts of the world, and since its origin is, on the entire historical scene of the world, almost the only subject of consideration. . . . With this mighty Revolution are directly or indirectly linked almost all the newest destinies and present circumstances of all nations on earth. Whatever is not connected with it, can claim comparatively only a side look. The history of the French Revolution is the universal history of the newest times."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Rotteck, vol. iv, pp. 3 and 7.

2. Compared with the Reformation.—As the Reformation began the deliverance of the Church of God from the fetters of darkness of that woman, who by her sorceries had deceived all nations,<sup>1</sup> so was the French Revolution a deliverance from the fetters of the worldly power of the same woman. These two events herein resemble each other. Both fought against the same enemy, and though their purposes were in their nature different, yet in their intention they were one. Both fought for liberty—the Reformation, for that of the Word of God; the French Revolution, for the principles of the worldly (or beastly) system. The Reformation was accordingly a revolution against the Romish Church; the French Revolution was a reformation of the worldly system.

3. Its true nature and tendency.—This event has been considered as something problematical and inexplicable; but rightly looked at, it explains itself, and is simply the unfolding of the beast's real nature, and of the principle originally lying at the foundation of the worldly kingdom, which principle is unbelief. For, if a certain amount of unbelief is right, then, also, full or consistent unbelief, *i. e.*, the rejection of all divine revelation, and the sole acceptance and practice of what the mere natural man likes or deems allowable is right. This is the nature and tendency of the French Revolution. It is simply the principle of unbelief logically carried out. This is also, as we have seen, the principle upon which the first worldly government was founded, and upon which, in fact, all the worldly governments are based. It is the principle which many worldly rulers and other men follow, by doing just as they please without regard to the law of God. It is thus exactly the same thing which Paul calls the mystery of lawlessness,<sup>2</sup> which in the future shall be revealed, when he that now

<sup>1</sup> Rev. xvii, 3; xviii, 23.    <sup>2</sup> 2 Thes. ii, 7.

restraineth shall be taken out of the way. Consequently this event is in its nature and whole appearance a little prelude to the future full antichristianity. The last great drama of our dispensation from the side of the adversary will be a repetition on a large scale, and in the very highest degree possible, of all the horrors and abominations of the French Revolution throughout the entire kingdom of the ten horns under the last head of the beast—the antichrist.

THE PURPOSE OF THIS BOWL.—1. Though not every thing is here literally expressed in the text, yet it is plainly enough indicated, for God's purpose was "that they repent of their works." This has, indeed, in part reference to their works during the Revolution. God certainly did not allow the Revolution to come in order to punish them for the works which they would do in the Revolution. It is rather to be understood that it chiefly refers to those evil works of vehement and repeated religious persecutions since the Reformation, for which they never showed the least repentance, but boldly justified themselves. In regard to these persecutions while in the third bowl, other nations were punished for such sins, France received but a small share, and we remarked that its judgment might be deferred to a later date. Here in this fifth bowl France is more severely visited than all other nations. The judgment falls especially upon that very class which was the most guilty in the murderous persecution of the witnesses of the truth of Christ.

2. This event appears clearly as a kind of reply to the unfolding of the extraordinary power of the Church of God in the fourth bowl. Here the beast shows what it is able to do: unfolding its inner character to an uncommon extent, manifesting thus to the Church and to the world the real intention and purpose, lying hidden in its mind from the beginning.

3. Another part of the purpose of this bowl lies in this: The beast, by breaking loose from the dominion of the woman, and assuming an independent position, opens thereby a door for a further powerful unfolding of operations with its own innate nature, which course—though for some time straitened—it has pursued vigorously, and whose continuation, in connection with other corresponding matter, is brought before us by the

## SIXTH BOWL.

Rev. xvi, 12: "And the sixth poured out his bowl upon the great river, the Euphrates, and the water thereof was dried up."

We have seen the signification of the great river Euphrates above.<sup>1</sup> It signifies the great nation of the Turks. Upon them is this bowl of wrath poured out, causing a drying up of this great nation—a gradual decrease, until it finally vanishes. The purpose of this drying up is stated as follows:

"That the way might be made ready for the kings that [come] from the sun rising."

Thus the Turks must make room for certain rulers, or kings, that shall come. This is the sense of these words. Who are these coming rulers? To the better understanding of them a description of their descent is given. "They are from the sunrising."—Now, if we take the sun in its natural, or spiritual sense, it designates either way the place and the people to whom the sun arose first. In the natural sense the sun arose first in the East, where Adam, Noah, and Abraham had their abodes, and where God also promised to the seed of Abraham the best part of the East as a possession, and which will, in future and forever, again be the possession of that seed.<sup>2</sup> The sun of divine revelation arose first to Abraham and his seed. Israel's

<sup>1</sup> Rev. ix, 14.  
Isa. xvi, xvii.

<sup>2</sup> Ezek. xxxvii, 21-25; Deut. xxx, 1-6;

descent, as a nation, is actually from the sunrising. God has made it the bearer of his light, and from Israel comes Christ, the true sun. Again, Israel is represented as a nation of kings. For this purpose God originally established them: "And ye shall be to me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation."<sup>1</sup> "And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him."<sup>2</sup> They obtain this dominion by the rising of the Sun of righteousness, *i. e.*, by Christ's next coming, where they, as a nation, shall be renewed in their hearts, and thus through Christ be qualified for this office. They, therefore, are, in regard to time and according to their nature, actually the rulers or kings of the sunrising.

However, before Christ's next coming, the Jews will possess again the holy land, though not renewed in their hearts, but in their natural, carnal condition. This appears from many testimonies of holy writ, especially from Ezekiel.<sup>3</sup> Consider closely in this prophecy the three conditions of the people of Israel, which are there depicted to us by figures.

In the first, they appear as very many, and very dry bones scattered in an open valley. In the second, there is a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones come together, bone to his bone; and sinews and flesh and skin grew over them, yet they were still without life. In the third they appear as revived by the Spirit of the Lord.

The first condition represents them as they are found to-day and since the last destruction of the temple all over the world, dead and very dry.

The second condition points to a gathering of them out of the places where they lie scattered, and to a carnal restoration. This restoration, however, has not yet

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<sup>1</sup> Ex. xix, 6.    <sup>2</sup> Dan. vii, 27; ii, 44.    <sup>3</sup> Ezek. xxxvii, 1-4.

taken place, but will a short time before the next coming of Christ. The Israelites will gather in the land of Canaan and organize themselves externally and religiously as a nation, without being renewed in their hearts.<sup>1</sup>

The third condition represents the Israelitish nation descended from those who, at the coming of Christ, give glory to the God of heaven, and remain alive,<sup>2</sup> and who, consequently, shall be renewed by the Spirit of God. Now, after this bowl has effected advantages for the divine cause, there comes again the activity of the united force of the adversaries:

VERSES 13-16: "And I saw [coming] out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet, three unclean spirits, as it were frogs: for they are spirits of devils, working signs; which go forth unto the kings of the whole world, to gather them together unto the war of the great day of God, the Almighty. (Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.) And he gathered them together into a place which is called in Hebrew, Harmageddon."

This prophecy is not hard to explain. We know the three chief leaders of the adversary party who appear here on the scene of action. That the dragon and false prophet, each for himself sends forth a spirit out of his mouth, we do not wonder at, for they both are on the earth; but that also the beast can do the same, while it is personally in the abyss, surprises us. This furnishes us a clear proof how it may, in fact, though residing in the abyss, be able to be active on earth. We see here how these three Satans are working together.

The three outgoing spirits are designated as unclean: not discerning between the holy and the unholy, but to whom all things are acceptable, if they only further their selfish purposes. Again, they are compared to *frogs*,

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxiv, 32.

<sup>2</sup> Isa. x, 20-22; xi, 11-16; Jer. xxiii, 3-8; Mich. v, 6.

which places their impure character into a still stronger light, representing them as beings of the lowest grade, living in marshes, hiding in the mud, endowed with comparatively large mouths, making a great and senseless noise, especially in the twilight, rather shunning the full sunlight. Another characteristic of theirs is that they are amphibia, capable of living in the water as well as on the land, which shows their remarkable adaptation to move in the element signifying principle and religion, as well as in the other element signifying lawlessness. It is said of the plague of frogs in Egypt that these loathsome creatures entered every accessible place and vessel, even into the ovens and kneading troughs; a signification which may also apply to our text. They are truly spirits of devils (or demons); because they come from the devil himself, and from his two closest relations in spirit and nature, working signs; whose activity is accompanied with extraordinary deeds which appear to the human understanding as wonders. "Which go forth unto the kings of the whole world," apostles and missionaries of Satan, who, according to the instruction received, direct their attacks towards the chief personalities of the human society to be conquered. "Kings" does not necessarily mean simply the crowned heads, though these are not excluded if they show themselves inclined towards these Satanic agents. "Kings" here rather signifies all those influential heads of learned men, speakers, writers, politicians, etc., who by their extraordinary talents or skill are leading spirits in the world. Men like Voltaire, Rousseau, and others were in their times mightier than many a king, mightier even than all the princes of Europe combined, for through their ideas and other co-operating circumstances they laid the foundation for the Revolution which not only shook France, but the whole of Europe, and in part other portions of the world. So was Luther not a king,

but in the ideas which he expressed he was mightier and more influential than any king of his time. In former ages the world was governed by physical power and the sword. Later, through the Reformation and the French Revolution, liberty of thinking and speaking became again the property of the people, and ideas which are disseminated by speech and writing rule the world. It is significant that these spirits go not only to many such influential individuals, or to all in a certain country, but to those of the whole inhabited earth (*οἰκουμένης ὅλης*), and for this purpose: "To gather them together unto the war of the great day of God, the Almighty." This is

*The issue to which Satan and his spirits shall push the matter.* Understand us aright. This may not be directly his intention; but his relentless opposition will bring matters to such an issue. Now, as he was long ago successfully working with his immense army of spirits, it is not to be supposed that he will here discharge these forces, and instead of them engage the forces of these spirits just going forth. Not at all. There is here no discharge of forces hitherto successfully engaged, but chiefly a change in the plan, required by the circumstances of the extraordinary increase of power in the Church of God. The adversary, then, increases his effectiveness by adding new and more effective forces to his strength, and by applying them all on an improved plan. Hence the war is now begun and carried on with all his power, and more determinedly than ever. Death, on the pale horse, and Hades, the kingdom of death, following with him, are Satan's ready and mighty allies. In fact, from this time begins the last great contest which ends with the day of the Lord. This is the actual condition of things, and the reason why this Satanic trinity is, so to say, doubling itself, as each of these three Satans in his position and quality sends forth into the world a corresponding, active spirit. It may also be ac-



cepted with certainty that all the hosts of evil spirits together will readily co-operate with these three newly starting spirits, in order to carry out the proposed plan. The other explanations of this prophecy are best taken in

#### THE REPRESENTATION OF THE HISTORICAL FULFILLMENT OF THIS BOWL.

I. The drying up of the river Euphrates or the decrease of the Turks as a nation, is a fact generally known in our time, it being evident to all. While yet within the memory of many now living, and during many centuries, the name of *Turk* caused terror everywhere, it now awakens generally rather contempt; and from the visible decline of this nation the Oriental question has become a very important one. The decrease of the national strength of the Turks appeared first plausibly in the severing of the comparatively small people of Greece from the dominion of the Turks after a struggle of nine years in 1830. According to this the pouring out of this sixth bowl must have taken place a little earlier. The causes which effected the decrease of this great river of Turks may be internal as well as external; but the chief cause is that the Lord has numbered the days of the Turkish empire. As he caused in the sixth trumpet the flood of this great river to flow over the nations of the Old World, so does he also cause by this sixth bowl the water of this great river to dry up, that the way may be prepared for those to whom God has promised the land of Canaan as a possession forever, and who are destined—in the future—to assume, among the nations of the earth, the first position.

II. Signs of an external restoration of the Israelites in Jerusalem and Canaan are also existing. Though there are many unbelieving Israelites who care little or nothing for the promises of God made and given to their fathers, still there are not a few who firmly believe, and

who are looking with great longing for the time when their desire shall be fulfilled. The number of such longing ones, from different countries of the earth, increases from year to year in and around Jerusalem, and truly God will not deceive them in his clearly stated promises.<sup>1</sup> With these external blessings they should indeed also know those of the salvation in Christ, to which many may be led; yet remember that this restoration *before* Christ's coming is in its *general* character consisting only of bones, sinews, flesh, and skin; spiritual life is not yet generally existing.<sup>2</sup>

III. The going forth of these spirits of devils unto the kings of the whole world. While the great river Euphrates is drying up, these three spirits are exercising every means in their power in order to carry out this newly planned work of the devil. This last great conflict has consequently been going on for some time, and is actually the history of the present time. The principles and objects, therefore, about which men are fighting in our times, must chiefly be those indicated in this sixth bowl. Here we come to the times where the things long ago signified by God in the Revelation are actually going into fulfillment before our eyes! How important for us that we should understand the signs of the times! How thankful ought we to be for the light of divine revelation, which enables us to understand and judge rightly the movements and events progressing and occurring, and to see how far we have advanced in the fulfillment of prophesied events! Let us now briefly consider the working of each of these three evil spirits.

1. The spirit of the dragon. This one is evidently working in harmony with the position and nature of the dragon. The latter appeared in Eden, and maintains throughout the entire history the position of first inciter

<sup>1</sup> Deut. xxx, 1-6; Jer. xxix, 14; xxxii, 37-42; Amos ix, 4.

<sup>2</sup> Ezek. xxxvii, 8.

to evil. Hence it may justly be expected that this spirit, coming forth from the dragon, assumes a position similar to the latter, and is intent upon bringing forth the first incitations to every evil movement appearing on the scene from the beginning of this contest to its close. The activity of this spirit of the dragon is therefore not so easily recognized in the fully developed events, but rather more in their origin, as inventions, and suggested ideas brought forth by the old serpent. Because the Church of God has since the fourth bowl unfolded such an unusually strong and far extending activity, and because there are even at the beginning of this sixth bowl additional advantages indicated for her, therefore the chief leader of the adversary party sees himself compelled to take a new position. He is urged to this by the position gained by the Church, and by the full unfolding for which his own work calls. The time is nearing its close. The day of the Lord is not far off; hence, if Satan intends to carry out his plan, he has to do it soon. This he knows very well.<sup>1</sup> For this reason he is pushing his work to the uttermost. We thus see how unbelief is manifesting itself in our times in the most shameless and most wicked forms, not only rejecting many doctrines of divine revelation, but all of them, even denying the existence of God. Farther than this unbelief can not go.

How the spirit of the dragon begins this most wicked of all his undertakings: Not directly denying all these truths, but in that old serpent's own sly way of ambiguity and doubt, as when he said to Eve: "Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree in the garden?" The present stage to which unbelief or infidelity has come is called Agnosticism, which means professing ignorance, because of the position the unbelievers of our times choose to take in regard to the revealed truths and the

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<sup>1</sup> Rev. xii, 12.

existence of God, saying that these are things which they would neither assert nor deny: they do not know.<sup>1</sup> Now this is evidently a subtle way of denying these things, and of leading men unawares into atheism. It is the way of the old serpent to hide the horrible form of evil in order to propagate it the more successfully. This idea, started by the spirit of the dragon, as is known, is the foundation of the so-called Socialism, now spread all over the world; a movement which threatens annihilation to the whole order of things existing at present, religious or politic. This immense party of mere beastly men hope for victory, and they will gain it for a short time, as we shall soon see in the next bowl.

2. The spirit of the beast.—This one is also working in harmony with the position and nature of the beast. What the beast purposed from the beginning and partly obtained, and wherein it made known its purpose, and its real nature, especially in the fifth bowl, is here further unfolded and pushed toward completion by the spirit going forth from this monster. Evidences of the visible activity of this spirit of the beast are in abundance before us. Already considered,

In general, it clearly appears that the beast has made a mighty step forward, and is nearer its real aim than ever before. As we see, it now comes forth quite boldly and openly with its real beastly nature and tendency. Not only do its adherents unreservedly declare that man is only an animal, and that hence his highest happiness consists in the gratification of his animal desires, but they even affirm, and take no little pains in trying to prove, that man's descent is from the beasts.

A more particular consideration of the worldly development since 1830 shows us still more strikingly how from that time an entirely different spirit entered the nations, awaking a desire and a striving for more civil

<sup>1</sup> Mark xi, 33.

liberty, and also bringing it into existence. It had for some time the appearance as if, after the mighty overturnings in the French Revolution of 1792, every thing had returned to a solid and satisfactory basis, but this was a delusion. The beast, which had made "unbelief" the foundation of its organization and purpose, could not rest, and will not rest until it has fully obtained its purpose. It did not rest in its throne on earth, but was working on in a hidden way, and surprised the world with a new revolution out of its throne, proclaiming therewith to the world its restless activity, its power, and its purpose. In this revolution of 1830, which shook all political systems in Europe, the spirit of the beast of this sixth bowl was actually going out to the kings of the whole world, and for the purpose mentioned. It was a spirit of general liberty, effecting many good things, but also bringing along destructive unbelief and more fully developed beastliness in sentiment and action.

Still the revolution of 1830 was not so vehement as that of 1792, from which it proceeded. It did not abolish religion, nor did it in other respects manifest full and unbounded beastliness. It observed silence in these things, and was, so far, moderate. However, this silence proved in no way a surrender of its beastliness and determined purpose; it was only policy. It was the newly accepted method (indicated in our text by the frog-nature) by which to adapt itself to the circumstances into which it was sent, in order to conquer men in a sly manner, as the false prophet did long ago, reaping such immense success. Recklessly dealing hard blows right and left is not the way to persuade and win the minds of men. The intention here seems evidently to be, first, to win a preponderating majority for the cause, and then to use force. The nations were, in 1792, not yet prepared for such principles as the French Revolution proclaimed. They were not even ready in 1830, hence, they

had to prepare for them. A chief means to this end was the energetic propagation of "infidelity," the beast's fundamental principle. Moreover, the repulsive appearance of the system of the beast itself had to be brought into a more pleasing form, and to be made more acceptable to men.

A great deal has been done in this direction since 1830, and as a result the various systems of communism and socialism have been brought forth, which appear to the natural man and superficial thinker really attractive and desirable, and compared with the present systems of social order, a great improvement. As early as 1843 this communistic system was earnestly discussed in Paris. The writer of this was an ear-witness of it. The spirit of the beast was all the time indefatigably active, as it also in 1848 manifested again its activity and purpose by a new revolution in Paris. That the communistic system was not on that occasion proclaimed, was only because they saw it was too early. However, in 1871, they ventured this step, and then the Commune was actually established in Paris. Thus a beginning and trial was made with the new system of the world, but even then it was too early, if not for Paris, at least for France and the other nations of the ten horns of the beast. All these are proofs of the activity of the spirit of the beast during the drying up of the great Euphrates, and at the same time the progress of his work is plainly brought to view.

Has this spirit been at rest since then? Hear, how he soon afterward expressed himself, and with what intent he further pursued his aim. (We translate a few extracts from Dr. Wichern's essay on the Social Question, delivered in the October meeting at Berlin, and published in the *Deutscher Volksfreund* of the American Tract Society, on February 10, 1872): "In Russia the movement assumes a dreadful form, threatening blood and murder.

From Petersburg a remarkable instruction for the revolutionists was proclaimed in July. The members of the society were called upon to help in the generalization of such misery and such evils as will finally outwear all the patience of the people. The impending, all-destroying revolution of the people shall distinguish itself from the other western revolutions in that those allowed property and traditions of state order to remain standing. This impending revolution shall abolish every thing statal. Our mission, therefore, is terrible, complete, unsparing destruction; the protest not in words, but in deeds against all magistracy and clergy, against the guilds and the fist of the devourer of the world (meaning the highest authority, the emperor). It needs—as it is finally stated—the establishment of a world of daring robbers. To unite this world into an invincible and all-destroying power, is our organization, conspiracy, and mission.”

“The congress of September 17th in London resolved to fix its eye in future especially upon Russia, for the propagation of the Internationals, and upon the suggestion of Karl Marx (chief of the Internationals), and constantly to combine from that time the political question with the social during the agitation, thus to admit the pattern of the Paris Commune.

“In the same month the delegates of thirty committees of the Internationals met in Geneva, and chose for their next operation Brussels, Rome, and Madrid, evidently the centers of rank Catholic countries, on the point of dissolution. The committee in London issued therewith a circular to all committees of the Internationals, in which all members in all countries are imperiously commanded to stir the fire of hatred and of vengeance which we have kindled against religion, the authorities, the rich, and the citizens. To all the members it is announced that our social ideas are from day to day more appreciated by the proletariat of the whole world. We shall

soon, it is said in conclusion, have recourse to vehement and terrible explosions, which shall make an end to the now existing social system. We shall, if necessary, lay low with the ax and the gun every thing now standing in the civil and religious establishments.

“The Commune, that first bloody creation of the Internationals, says one of their organs, is a party which is not afraid of God, and understands how to conquer men. Concerning the good God, we acknowledge only one: man! And—you shall see!”

These utterances of the spirit of the beast show us plainly in which direction the present conflict is tending, and what the real issue will and must be. The events of the last years show quite as plainly how these beast-men, inspired from the spirit of the beast, were especially active in Russia, not deterred by any outside pressure. If it is further considered that these Internationals or Socialists have everywhere their secret organizations, not only in all the larger and smaller cities of Europe, but in fact throughout the whole world, so far as Europeans come in contact with other nations, it is not hard to see what the immediate result of this stirring up of this fire by the spirit of the beast will be. It will, after having burnt long enough secretly, and become strong, burst forth again in full blast before the world; *i. e.*, there will again break forth suddenly a revolution from the throne of the beast, of such magnitude and extent, as men have never yet seen. Newspapers, treatises, writings of learned men, philosophers, and authors are working for the same purpose, because kindled by the same spirit; many with full knowledge of the matter, many not knowing what they are doing.

3. The spirit of the false prophet pursues the same purpose as this prophet, *viz.*, to bring pious and religiously inclined persons under the influence of the beast, as we remarked in the treble. Here he will not only



do the same, but more. The more advanced and higher conditions of life, to which the Church of God attained, will naturally incite him to greater activity. He will more energetically attack the religious sphere, and bring his art of dissimulation to the highest point, in order to effect an entrance among the truly pious, and introduce among them laxness, confusion, lameness, and every possible injury, so that in individual Christian life, as also in that of Churches, there will soon be little more to see than an appearance of godliness.

The success of his activity is also visible. By the extraordinary unfolding of sun-power in the Church of God in our times, there are, alas! not a few blemishes to be seen. In general the Church-members of our times are not as strict in their separation from the world as their ancestors were who lived forty and more years ago. Superficiality and not a little approximation to the world characterizes a great number. Our times excel any previous age in men of ability and influence—kings in a certain sense—who profess orthodoxy, yet when examined are far from being sound in doctrine. While many of them become known, yet there are not a few smart enough to spin their false doctrines so fine that only acute judges may discern them. For this reason are these men in a position to scatter their noxious seed very successfully, furthering the work of the false prophet. What such men have sowed and done will only later become generally manifest from the fruit which comes from their seed.

The origin of new sects, as the Mormons and others with less perverted doctrines, which appear in a garment of apparent truth, but have not the Spirit of Jesus, belong to the workings of this spirit going forth from the false prophet.

This spirit is not only active in the independent Evangelical communities requiring a change of mind,

but also in the State Churches, Protestant and Catholic, the influence of this spirit is plainly visible. It is astonishing how in the Old World, in the kingdoms of the ten horns, indifference toward religion has increased in the last decades, and how few people visit the churches! Here the spirit of the false prophet has already partly succeeded in "making the earth and them that dwell therein to worship the first beast whose deadly stroke was healed."

Even among the Jews this spirit of the false prophet is manifest. The so-called Reform-Jews are, as a rule, apostates from the revealed truths of God, inclined to mere appearance of religion, to unbelief and animalism.

Other proofs of the special activity of this spirit are furnished us by all those books and writings which were and are still written for the propagation and defense of false doctrines, and whose name is "Legion," and which in acuteness, adroitness, and energy surpass any thing of the kind of former years. It is maintained that the first book which Dr. D. Strauss wrote (1835) is the most learned, most acute, and ablest book which was ever written against Christianity.<sup>1</sup>

4. The gathering unto the war of the great day of God, the Almighty. This is a gathering effected from two different sides. First, by the united efforts of these three spirits and the whole party of adversaries. The principle upon which they started and are prosecuting their work brings them to such a termination. Their principle is lawlessness, a life of sensual, carnal enjoyment, without regard to God's holy law; and they inflexibly persist in establishing such a manner of living as a principle and system for the whole world. Now, under the antichrist, such a life of sin will be brought about—an unfolding of the mystery of lawlessness—so

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Ph. Schaff's *Person of Christ*, American Tract Society, p. 149.

far as the Old World is concerned. The antichrist will be the completion of this principle of lawlessness and the king of such a kingdom.<sup>1</sup> He will oppose and exalt himself against all that is called God or that is worshiped, and present himself as the one bringing the long-desired happiness for the world, hence present himself as the Christ, and even as God. Him will the carnally-minded Jews acknowledge as the Messiah.<sup>2</sup> As at that time the Jews will have built again the temple and Jerusalem, he (the antichrist) shall choose this place for his residence, sit in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.<sup>3</sup> In general and chiefly from that place will he manifest his greatness, power, and dominion, so that his armies shall like a river overflow and fill the land.<sup>4</sup> To such presumptuous height of wickedness and abomination shall things be pushed. Thus the antichrist shall come into the holy land,<sup>5</sup> besiege Jerusalem,<sup>6</sup> and conquer it; but this will not last long, as the whole time of this seventh head of the beast is called a short time.<sup>7</sup> How matters shall proceed in immediate connection with this, we shall see from the consideration of the other side by which this gathering unto the war is likewise effected—namely,

By the Lord himself: "And he gathered them together into the place which is called in Hebrew Har-mageddon." Some time after having taken possession of Jerusalem, the antichrist may suppose it to be his own choice to gather his armies south of Jerusalem, in the land of Edom, for a great purpose of his own; but in fact the Lord's hand is in it. For by this the Lord thus gathers the antichrist and his armies into the last contest, revealing himself to them in judgment and for their destruction. This gathering of them into this place Har-

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<sup>1</sup> Dan. xi, 36; Rev. xvii, 9, 10.   <sup>2</sup> John v, 43; Zech. xiv, 14; xii, 2.   <sup>3</sup> 2 Thess. ii, 4.   <sup>4</sup> Isa. viii, 5-8.   <sup>5</sup> Dan. xi, 36-41.   <sup>6</sup> Isa. xxix, 1-8; Zech. xii, 1-3; xiv, 1-3.   <sup>7</sup> Rev. xvii, 10.

mageddon (from *Horma*—*i. e.*, destruction, and *geddon*—*i. e.*, armies—destruction of armies) is quite plainly described by the prophet: “For behold, in those days, and in that time, when I shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem, I will also gather all nations, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat, and will plead with them there for my people and for my heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations, and have parted my land. Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles; Prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let the men of war draw near; let them come up: Beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruning-hooks into spears: let the weak say, I am strong. Assemble yourselves, and come, all ye heathen, and gather yourselves together round about: thither cause thy mighty ones to come down, O Lord. Let the heathen be weakened, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat: for there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about. Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe: come, get you down (or, literally: come, tread the wine-press); for the press is full, the fats overflow; for their wickedness is great. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision: for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision. The sun and the moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall withdraw their shining. The Lord shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake: but the Lord [will be] the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel.”<sup>1</sup> This is evidently the very same catastrophe which we explained in the Treble,<sup>2</sup> and which we also saw in the Base,<sup>3</sup> and in the Alto,<sup>4</sup> and of which we shall see still more in the Tenor:<sup>5</sup> the coming of the Lord and the destruction of the wicked.

<sup>1</sup> Joel iii, 1, 2, 9-16.    <sup>2</sup> Rev. xiv, 17-20.    <sup>3</sup> Rev. vi, 12-17.

<sup>4</sup> Rev. xi, 13.    <sup>5</sup> Rev. xix, 11-21.

From these and other passages<sup>1</sup> it plainly appears that this siege of Jerusalem, its conquest, the gathering of the armies of the nations into Harmageddon or valley of Jehoshaphat, the coming of the Lord, as also the Millennium or full establishment of his kingdom on earth among the remnants of Israel and of the Gentiles, are closely connected. In verses 12, 13, is a description how these nations, trodden by the Lord in this wine-press, shall perish. Read carefully this whole last chapter of Zechariah.

Because such great things here are caused by God, this day is called the great day of God; and because all the spiritual powers of Satan and those of the whole world unite against the Lord it is called "the great day of God, the Almighty."

5. The warning of the Lord: "Behold, I come as a thief." By this is signified: (1) That the Lord comes at a time when he is not expected. To this may be added the signification which the Lord himself indicates in the coming of a thief<sup>2</sup>—viz.: (2) To steal—i. e., to take away, as the Lord is here taking away from the earth those that are his. (3) To kill, as the Lord shall here kill his enemies. (4) To destroy, as the Lord shall here not only destroy those who destroy the earth,<sup>3</sup> but their whole work will be destroyed.

"Blessed is he that watcheth and keepeth his garments." The Lord teaches us in the Gospel<sup>4</sup> that all the virgins, waiting for the bridegroom, not only became sleepy, but all *slept*; hence there is here a renewed, plain intimation: (1) That a strong inclination to spiritual sleep shall prevail. (2) That there is great danger of losing the garments received from Christ.

"Lest he walk naked, and they see his shame." That he may not, in the eyes of the Lord and his angels,

<sup>1</sup> Zech. xii, 2, 3; xiv, 1-21. <sup>2</sup> John x, 10. <sup>3</sup> Rev. xi, 18.  
<sup>4</sup> Matt. xxv, 5.

be found without having the righteousness of Christ, for thus he would appear as walking in his full nakedness of inborn sinfulness with all his shameful works.

#### ALL SIX BOWLS TOGETHER.

Now, in considering these bowls together, as they follow each other, we observe that they all touch the same subjects which were touched by the six trumpets, and in the same order: (1) The earth; (2) the sea; (3) the river; (4) the sun; (5) the abyss, the seat of the beast; (6) the great river Euphrates. However, the bowls have another purpose than the trumpets, especially the first four. For instance, as the first four trumpets had in view the injury of the Church of God, so had the first four bowls in view the building up and strengthening of the Church of God. Again the fifth trumpet introduced from the abyss a religious movement, a darkening of the light and of the atmosphere of Christian religion by the rise of Mohammedism. The fifth bowl, poured upon the throne of the beast, whose soul is yet in the abyss, caused a *political* movement, which entirely abolished Christian religion. The sixth trumpet again gave the signal for the loosing of four destroying angels in the great river Euphrates, whose wild waters caused an immense and unheard-of destruction. The sixth bowl effected, on the one hand, a drying up of the waters of this great river, and, on the other hand, the Satanic trinity sent forth their frog-spirits to the kings of the whole inhabited earth to gather them into that great war. In these peculiar reciprocal relations of the bowls and trumpets are remarkable significations.

#### THE SEVENTH BOWL.

REV. xvi, 17: "And the seventh poured out his bowl upon the air; and there came forth a great voice out of the temple, from the throne, saying, It is done."

The air, or atmosphere, belongs to the heaven, as is

seen from expressions like, "the birds of heaven," and "the rain from heaven." In this does this seventh bowl correspond with the seventh trumpet, which also affects heaven.<sup>1</sup> "The air" is what we breathe; the atmosphere, in which we live; but the air is also the dwelling-place of the evil spirits, the rulers of the darkness of this world, and in this respect very significant. "The temple" is doubtless the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven, from which the seven angels with their bowls came, and which was filled with the smoke from the glory of God, etc.<sup>2</sup> "The throne" is that of God,<sup>3</sup> and, therefore, this great voice is that of God or of a mighty angel at God's throne. "It is done," corresponds perfectly with the number seven. Accordingly, something very important has here reached its completion. It is obvious that this declaration refers to the work accomplished by these seven angels. "It is done," what God had commanded them to do. The last seven plagues are finished. The last thing that God would do to hinder the unfolding of the mystery of lawlessness is done, and now that tremendous storm which has been so long brewing breaks forth. This is the new thing which the seventh bowl brings us. In fact, we enter by this into a new Division of our Period, that distressful one, generally represented by the fifth seal: "Under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the Word of God and for the testimony of Jesus," etc.<sup>4</sup> This is the beginning of those days of tribulation of which the Lord says that if they were not shortened, no flesh would be saved. The magnitude and importance of these events which are here taking place is also confirmed and figuratively specified by what follows:

VERSE 18: "And there were lightnings, and voices, and thunders, and there was a great earthquake."

<sup>1</sup> Rev. xi, 15.  
<sup>4</sup> Rev. vi, 9-11.

<sup>2</sup> Rev. xv, 8.

<sup>3</sup> Rev. iv, 2-6; v, 1.

These figures we have already explained.<sup>1</sup> Of the earthquake we remarked that it signifies a shaking of that to which it refers; for instance, in referring to the sea, it signifies a storm.<sup>2</sup> In the base,<sup>3</sup> this shaking referred to the heavenly bodies. Here, too, it is a very great one: "Such as there was not since there were men upon the earth, so great an earthquake, so mighty." This greatness is still more closely characterized as follows:

VERSES 19, 20: "And the great city came into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and Babylon the great was remembered in the sight of God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath. And every island fled away, and mountains were not found."

What this great city is, we have seen above.<sup>4</sup> It is the kingdom of the beast, or the present worldly institution in opposition to the Church of God. The cities of the nations, are the national institutions, civic and religious; thus as well the existing forms of state government as also the state Churches. To the latter belongs the Romish Church; but Babylon the great does not fall like one of these. She is remembered before God in a special manner: to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath. Islands are small parts of the earth surrounded by water. As waters signify nations,<sup>5</sup> islands must signify mainly the separated religious bodies in the sea of nations, which are here fleeing away. Mountains signify kingdoms,<sup>6</sup> which here likewise disappear, for they were not found. Such a mighty shaking is this, that all these things happen. This is indeed a revolution, such as was not since there were men upon the earth, so great a revolution, so mighty! Here the point of time has arrived where the socialists, after long preparation, feel themselves strong

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<sup>1</sup> Rev. iv, 5; viii, 5.    <sup>2</sup> Matt. viii, 24.    <sup>3</sup> Rev. vi, 12.  
<sup>4</sup> Rev. xi, 13.    <sup>5</sup> Rev. xvii, 15.    <sup>6</sup> Dan. ii, 35; Ps. xxx, 8; Jer. li, 25.



enough to venture the great blow upon the present system of social order, everywhere undermined by them. The result is plainly placed before us. First, that organization of the beast consisting of ten parts contracts itself into a closer union—into three parts. (We shall soon see this more plainly.) All the hitherto existing worldly and religious organizations of the nations fall. The fierce wrath of God comes over Babylon the great, for which judgment these triumphing, raging socialists are God's instruments. All other moral and religious bodies separated from the state flee for their own safety from the dominion of the beast. The existence of such bodies or communities is henceforth no longer possible in this dominion, neither are any more kingdoms to be found. The victory of the socialists seems to be complete. Their beastly rage strikes down every thing that opposes them.

What this impending revolution implies. 1. It is the beginning of the full display of the mystery of lawlessness.<sup>1</sup> 2. It is likewise the apostasy or falling away mentioned by the apostle,<sup>2</sup> the greatest and most wicked apostasy that ever occurred, rejecting all of God's truths, which since the flood were always acknowledged or at least allowed to stand as divine ordinances. It is an apostasy from God himself, and with the exception of the wilderness, where God has prepared a place for his people, it will extend over the whole world, and will be established by the decree of worldly authority. 3. This revolution implies unquestionably the coming up of the beast out of the abyss. The madness here manifested can only fitly be compared to the power of the beast's personal presence on earth. No doubt to this fact that declaration from the throne of heaven also refers: "It is done!" What so long has been restrained<sup>3</sup>—the beast's ascent out of the abyss—is done.

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<sup>1</sup> 2 Thess. ii, 7.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, verse 3.

<sup>3</sup> 2 Thess. ii, 6, 7.

THIS PROPHECY IN ITS DETAILS MORE FULLY  
EXPLAINED.

How the great city comes into three parts. The beast, as an organization, develops itself gradually in the course of time. John saw it with seven heads and ten horns; but in the time of John it had actually only six heads, of which five had existed before and had fallen. With this sixth head itself, another development would take place, as Daniel describes it.<sup>1</sup> Here he sees four beasts, signifying four kingdoms, of which Rome, reckoned from Daniel's time and from the Babylonian kingdom, was the fourth. (However, reckoning from the beginning of the worldly kingdoms, which takes in Egypt and Assyria, Rome is the sixth.) These kingdoms are, in verse 17, called "kings," because they assumed among the kingdoms of their times the first position, and were thus the chief kingdoms. For this reason they are represented to John and to us as "kings" and "heads" on the beast. Now, out of this chief kingdom of Rome would, according to Daniel's explanation, come forth ten horns, signifying ten smaller powers or kingdoms (verse 7), which are the present ten leading nations of the Old World, formerly constituting parts of the Roman empire.

Even these ten horns, or ten leading kingdoms of the Old World, are not to remain unchanged to the end of our dispensation. There is a further change or development occurring in them; for while Daniel beheld them there came up another little horn (verse 8), which, as is known, is the antichrist, who finally becomes the seventh head of the beast. Now comes the chief point of our explanation, and this is what Daniel here intimates as before the horn which signifies the antichrist, only three preceding horns were plucked up by the roots. In verse

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<sup>1</sup> Dan. vii, 7-25.

24 these horns are called "kings;" and instead of "plucked up," the term "subdue" is used. According to this representation, there will thus exist, before the antichrist becomes sole ruler of the kingdoms, a political institution of three divisions, which will be subdued or abolished by the antichrist, when he shall set up himself as sole head and monarch over the whole. (In the transition of the republic of Rome to the empire, and also from the French Republic to the empire, the same thing took place. There was first a triumvirate, a dominion of three, and then an autocracy.) These three political divisions or parts into which the ten kingdoms shall be resolved before the antichrist becomes sole ruler, will, however, not last long. They are simply a mediating stage between the great distance from ten to one. Hence, before this great city, consisting of its ten parts, resolves itself into one, it contracts into three parts. The antichrist does not appear immediately with the beginning of the seventh bowl, but later. Of what nations these three parts shall consist is not stated. Should kinship of language and nationality be factors in this closer union, it might be accepted that all nationalities speaking German, together with Holland, England, Denmark, and Sweden, would form one part. The Latin nations of France, Spain, Portugal, Belgium, and Italy, a second part. Russia, Poland, Hungary, Greece, and Turkey, the third part. Thus, socialism shall contract or bring the nationalities of the ten kingdoms into an institution of three parts, and therewith prepare the way for the antichrist.

How the cities of the nations, *i. e.*, the hitherto existing worldly and religious institutions of the nations, shall fall, may be seen from the way in which things are done in a revolution. They will simply be declared as abolished, whether they be kingdoms or republics. With such as should resist, rough force will make short work.

How Babylon the great is remembered before God; we shall see specified in the next two chapters.

“And every island fled away.” In this expression the activity of each island for itself is set forth. So far as these islands are religious bodies and associations separated from the world and from the state, the second flight of the woman is here plainly indicated,<sup>1</sup> where the two wings of the great eagle are given to her, that she might fly into the wilderness unto her place.<sup>2</sup>

VERSE 21: “And a great hail [every stone] about the weight of a talent cometh down out of heaven upon men: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail, for the plague thereof is exceeding great.”

John does not say there fell hail from heaven, but after having hitherto used the past tense, he begins at once to speak in the present: “There comes down.” The hail follows immediately after this great revolution. Instead of the expected success of this newly introduced order of things, there comes a curse—a tremendous hail from heaven, the enormous size and destructive force of which may be estimated from its weight, as a talent contained over fifty-six pounds Troy. God gives these men “hail” for rain, and they blaspheme him because this plague is exceeding great. It plainly appears that they are very sorely deceived in their expectations. Must not every sensible person see beforehand that a system established on the spirit and principle of the beast can not possibly succeed? Is not the seal of absolute failure stamped on it from the beginning? When even now, under the influence of religion, and under the restraining laws of a well-regulated government, so much unrighteousness is practiced, as we daily see, what must it be when all these restraining means are abolished? The corruption must be boundless, the misery indescribably terrible. There the tiger will be literally let loose, and

<sup>1</sup> Rev. xii, 14.    <sup>2</sup> See note 26.

all other fearful beasts with him. That monster,<sup>1</sup> composed of many beastly natures, will unrestrainedly<sup>2</sup> gratify all its beastly lusts and desires. "And they that dwell on the earth shall wonder . . . when they behold the beast, that was, and is not, and shall [then] be present."<sup>3</sup> All this is the immediate consequence of those God-denying efforts which, since the sixth bowl, have been made so successfully all over the world, and which even from the beginning were the underlying principle of this monster. This condition of beastly licentiousness and godlessness will teach these men that affairs can not go on in this way, and that the way for the antichrist is being prepared; who, out of such confusion and misery shall bring help of his own kind, by reintroducing the acknowledgment of a God, and finally shall set himself up as God. This agrees with the unstable and unprincipled nature of the beast, which can, according to circumstances, declare that there is no God, and then again confess that there is one—can even acknowledge the most senseless being as God.

#### A WORD TO PARTIAL OR HALF-WAY INFIDELS.

Tell me, friends, you who are opposed to the principles of the Socialists, how much do you differ from them? The difference is only in this, that they are consistent in their profession, and you are inconsistent. They carry out their principle wholly, you remain standing half way, while you further their cause. Consider this well, you who laugh at the decided position of the believers, and think yourselves justified in remaining in what you consider harmless and innocent unbelief. The time will come when you shall, more than enough, yea, in an overflowing measure, taste, and experience the fruits of your principles, so that they shall become

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<sup>1</sup> Rev. xiii, 1-9.

<sup>2</sup> 2 Thess. ii, 6, 7.

<sup>3</sup> Rev. xvii, 8.

to you a wonder and disgust, if, indeed, they do not cause you to shudder with horror.

### SOME SPECIFICATIONS CONCERNING BABYLON THE GREAT.

The two following chapters of the Revelation do not contain a continuation of the prefigured history, but only some details concerning Babylon, whose fall is announced in the seventh bowl. There follows then:

#### I. A CLOSER EXPLANATION OF WHAT BABYLON IS.

REV. XVII, 1: "And there came one of the seven angels that had the seven bowls, and spake with me, saying, Come hither, I will show thee the judgment of the great harlot, that sitteth upon many waters."

It is probably the same angel that afterward showed John the woman, the bride of the Lamb.<sup>1</sup> Here he shows him the judgment of quite a different woman. The Scripture represents certain corporations as harlots. For instance, Judah and Samaria are called by that name,<sup>2</sup> because they were betrothed to the Lord by God's covenant, and proved themselves unfaithful to him. Corporations are thus fitly represented under the figure of a woman, and likewise also under the figure of a city, as we have seen in the Church of God, and in the beast, and here in Babylon, for the angel says, verse 18: "And the woman whom thou sawest is the great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth." From this it is evident that Babylon the great is a great corporation, and so much more, as she is ruling over the kings of the earth—considering them her subjects—also "the many waters upon which she sitteth," which signify peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues, standing under her influence.

That Babylon signifies Rome is a matter in which Catholic and Protestant commentators are agreed, only

<sup>1</sup> Rev. xxi, 9.    <sup>2</sup> Ezek. xxii.

the latter maintain that it signifies Rome under the popes, while the first claim that it signifies Rome under the Pagan emperors. That it does not signify Pagan Rome appears among other reasons also from the following:

1. The fall of the Roman Empire occurred in the year 476. The fall of Pagan Rome itself about one hundred years before; hence, nearer the beginning of Christianity than to our times; but the fall of Babylon the great, mark it well, belongs to the last events of our times, to the last seven plagues, even to the very last of these, viz., to the seventh.

2. The fall of the Roman Empire (and of Pagan Rome) does not correspond with the description of the fall of Babylon the great; it was neither as sudden, nor as great, nor as irreparably destructive as that of Babylon the great is described.

3. According to Daniel's representation, the fourth beast, which signifies the Roman Empire, should, through its fall form itself into ten horns, *i. e.*, into as many independent kingdoms, which also occurred, and which proves irrefutably:

*a.* That the Roman Empire does no more exist, hence, is already fallen, when the ten horns attain independence. Therefore, the Roman Empire can not be Babylon the great, because the latter still exists, though Pagan Rome be fallen.

*b.* It proves that the Roman Empire, as such, and even its ten horns, constitutes a part of the beast, upon which the harlot sits; hence, can not possibly be the harlot herself.

4. While the description of Babylon the great does not agree with the characteristics of the Roman Empire nor with Pagan Rome, it agrees completely with Papal Rome, as any one can see by comparing the figures and statements of the Revelation with the facts and the history of the Romish Church.

Verse 2 tells us with whom she maintained illicit relations, and states some of her general crimes: "With whom the kings of the earth committed fornication, and they that dwell in the earth were made drunken with the wine of her fornication." What this wine signifies, may be gathered from verse 4, namely, her doctrines which she presents to the inhabitants of the earth in her golden cup. Compare here verse 3 in Chapter xviii.

VERSE 3: "And he carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness."

This must be connected with the "come hither" in verse 1. John is here taken away from the scene in which he hitherto had been, and is carried into another.

"And I saw a woman sitting upon a scarlet-colored beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns."

This beast we know. That the Romish Church, by assuming dominion over the kings and nations of the earth, is actually sitting upon this beast, is a plain matter of fact. We also know how she came to sit upon it, viz., by the unholy union of Church and state under Constantine. At first, and for a long time, the Church suffered her husband (the state) to enjoy the honor of precedence, and was duly subject to him, but later, matters changed. She overreached him gradually, seized upon the dominion, and treated him as a vassal. He had to consent to be her bearer and willing riding-horse. From that time it was she who held the reins of government in the world and in the Church with the power of a despot. Every thing which moved within her jurisdiction had to dance according to her tune.

VERSE 4: "And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls" (which is the attire in which the higher dignitaries of the Romish Church appear—the bishops in purple, the



cardinals and the pope in scarlet), "having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations, even the unclean things of her fornication."

Abominations are detestable things. To these belong false doctrines, because they are the work of evil spirits.<sup>1</sup> Idolatry comes especially under this head,<sup>2</sup> hence, also iconolatry and the worship of supposed saints. What unclean things or "impurities" are, we have seen in the first bowl, where these were partly driven out of the system of the worldly Church. If they are even now presented in a golden cup, it does not change their nature, but shows all the more how her seduction consists chiefly in outward pomp.

VERSE 5: "And upon her forehead a name written, Mystery, Babylon the great, the mother of harlots, and of the abominations of the earth."

Though many things in the Romish Church are a mystery, and like the signification of her name, "Babylon," are a confusion in themselves, yet there are many things in her clearly perceptible, even at first sight, as if they were written on her forehead. That which she means to be, she declares freely and openly. For instance, she does not conceal the fact that she is making tradition her foundation, as well as the Bible. She presents her claims to the world and to others in plain terms. However, she is not the only unfaithful woman, but, what ought to be very significant to us, she is called, in regard to other religious bodies like her, "the great," and in regard to others "the mother of harlots," as also, "the mother of the abominations of the earth." She was in these things the first. Hence, her existence in principle dates back to the early times of the human race, and the Romish Church is consequently only the fully developed system of that principle.

<sup>1</sup> 1 Tim. iv, 1.

<sup>2</sup> Deut. xviii, 19; xx, 18; Dan. ix, 27; xii, 11.

VERSE 6: "And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the witnesses of Jesus. And when I saw her, I wondered with a great wonder."

The angel shows us the followers of Jesus in two respects: first, such as were especially esteemed by God on account of their sanctification, and who, through it, were lights in the world; others, however, who, through oral confession, by teaching and preaching, were testifying of Jesus. Against persons of this kind did this woman sin; not only as might be said, staining herself with their blood, but in a much stronger sense. As certain animals drink the blood of their victims, and, hence, are thirsting after it, so is this woman presented as blood-thirsty. She drank the blood of the saints and of the witnesses of Jesus in such a measure, that in the light of Scripture she became drunken with it—acting as a drunken woman. Murder is the greatest crime that can be committed against a man, but against saints and witnesses of Jesus it is so much greater, because whatsoever is done to one of the least that belong to Christ, is done to Christ himself. This awful sin, therefore, God will punish terribly. That in the future an institution would be formed, which should persecute the saints and witnesses with such madness and blood-thirstiness as John saw in the figure, he wondered at greatly, and we, who read the history of the Romish Church, are not less filled with amazement and horror in seeing how this Church has so literally fulfilled this prophecy. The verses 7–15 are explained above with the beast in the Treble.

#### THE JUDGMENT OF BABYLON.

VERSE 16: "And the ten horns which thou sawest, and the beast, these shall hate the harlot, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and shall burn her utterly with fire."

Here we are informed who shall be her destroyers,

namely the ten horns, *i. e.*, the citizens of the ten kingdoms which are at present forming the body of the beast: hence, a great majority of those who hitherto were actual members of the Romish Church, but who, by socialistic influence shall become her most bitter opponents. However, not these alone are her destroyers, but as the text says, "the ten horns and the beast." The horns and the beast are here presented as two things, and this they are, as body and soul are two things. The horns are the external or bodily instruments, but the soul of the beast is a spirit or demon from the abyss. The beastly men and this demon shall work conjointly for the destruction of the Romish Church, as it is said, verse 17: "For God did put in their hearts to do his mind, and to come to one mind, and to give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God should be accomplished." So far as these men are willing to give their power and authority to this demon from the abyss (verse 13), for the destruction of Babylon, they are doing the will of God. He uses the wrath of these men and the wickedness of this demon to execute his judgment on Babylon for the fulfillment of all his words uttered concerning this judgment.

How they shall do it is also stated, "The ten horns and the beast shall hate the harlot." The great majority of the members of the Romish Church who once loved her, shall come to hate her—first, become indifferent, then, disinclined, and finally, full of hatred toward her. The beast also must have an old grudge against her. It must rather have been contrary to the wild disposition of this demon to serve as a humble slave, as the very obedient saddle horse of this mean and proud woman. In consequence, then, of their united hatred, they shall make her desolate, tear down her whole attire, and make her naked. They shall also eat her flesh, *i. e.*, whatever may serve to gratify the animal wants of these destroyers

they will appropriate to themselves, and what does not suit their taste, they will burn. Here we have the well known threats of the Socialists and Nihilists of our time, predicted almost eighteen hundred years ago, clearly before us. Complete destruction by furious violence will especially be the lot of the Romish Church, though it may in part be that of other institutions. Verse 18 is explained in verse 1.

### III. THE FALL OF BABYLON PROCLAIMED TO [THE MEN OF] THE EARTH BY AN ANGEL OF GREAT AUTHORITY :

REV. XVIII, 1-3: "After these things I saw another angel coming down out of heaven, having great authority; and the earth was lightened with his glory. And he cried with a mighty voice, saying, Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, and is become the habitation of devils, and a hold of every unclean and hateful bird." (This has evidently reference to the locality of Babylon, and chiefly to her main seat, Rome. The following, however, refers again to Babylon as a religious institution.) "For of the wine of the wrath of her fornication all nations have drunk; and the kings of the earth committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth waxed rich by the power of her luxury."

This proclaiming angel is not only another than the one in the preceding chapter, but here is also another purpose. There, that angel made more minute explanations about the nature of the woman Babylon and her relations to the beast, especially directed to John and the believers. Here the object is to make known the fall of Babylon to the earth by an angel of great authority, and whose glory lightened the earth. Thus God, besides making known this event to John and the believers, makes it especially known to the earth, by another angel. Is this something real or figurative? There is certainly reality, though not in the form, power, and glory of this angel, but the reality may at least make itself known in a powerful spiritual impression upon the

minds of those for whom it is especially intended. The purpose of this angel is manifestly to enlighten the men by the authority and glory given to him, to call their attention to the imminent fall of Babylon, and to free themselves from the influence of the wine of wrath of this woman. Notice well how the fall of Babylon is proclaimed—namely, as already happened: “Fallen, fallen is Babylon,” etc., a manner of speech often occurring in the Scripture, in order to express the immutable certainty of the event that shall come to pass.<sup>1</sup> Consequently there is connected with this proclamation

#### IV. A WARNING BY ANOTHER VOICE FROM HEAVEN:

VERSES 4, 5: “And I heard another voice from heaven saying, Come forth, my people, out of her, that ye have no fellowship with her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues: for her sins have reached even unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities.”

While this voice is addressing itself to God’s people, it is also addressing itself to all truly pious souls in the Romish Church, exhorting them to come out of her. There follows now

#### V. A CALL TO REWARD BABYLON AS SHE HAD OTHERS:

VERSES 6, 7: “Render unto her even as she rendered, and double [unto her] the double according to her works: in the cup which she mingled, mingle unto her double. How much soever she glorified herself, and waxed wanton, so much give her of torment and mourning.”

This is God’s charge to her destroyers. Then comes

#### VI. A DESCRIPTION OF BABYLON’S GREAT DELUSION AND HAUGHTINESS:

“For she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and I am no widow, and shall in no wise see mourning.”

<sup>1</sup> Compare Jude 15; Isa. ix, 6; Rev. xvi, 19.

This is entirely the language of the Romish Church of old and of our times. She has to this day not given up any of her claims; nor can she do so very well, without injury to her whole system. She will therefore adhere firmly to this sentiment of her heart, and occasionally give expression to it, until this terrible earthquake shall make a sudden and woeful end of her.

VII. THE JUDGMENT OF GOD, THE CONSEQUENCE OF THIS DELUSION AND HAUGHTINESS, reads thus:

VERSE 8: "Therefore in one day shall her plagues come, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire; for strong is the Lord God which judged her."

Though men are executing this judgment on her, yet it is from God. It would not at all be contrary to the signification of our text if, as regards the chief locality of Babylon, an actual earthquake and fire, out of the inner part of the earth, should co-operate with this destruction. What the destruction, effected by human instrumentality, shall really be, may be conceived by considering the madness of 1792, and the desperate proceeding of the commune of 1871, in Paris, as types and indications on a small scale. For what is coming to pass here will in violence, vehemence, and extent surpass by far any thing of the kind in the human sphere. There have been great and indescribable devastations in the history of man in which we have authentic evidence that evil spirits were prime movers.<sup>1</sup> These, however, were subordinate spirits compared with the one who, in power and ability, is the next to Satan himself; to whom Satan gives his throne, his authority, and great power, and who besides this has to avenge personal wrongs of more than fifteen hundred years, with a divine mandate of a double retribution. The excesses which shall be committed by

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<sup>1</sup> Rev. ix, 1-21.

these destroyers—inspired by the beast's presence on earth—must surpass all human conception.

### VIII. THE LAMENTATION OF HER FALL:

VERSES 9, 10: "And the kings of the earth, who committed fornication and lived wantonly with her, shall weep and wail over her, when they look upon the smoke of her burning, standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Woe, woe, the great city Babylon, the strong city! For in one hour is thy judgment come."

As the destroyers shall with the same rage, and in connection with the destruction of Babylon, march against the kings, it can be seen why these kings, though hitherto living in the same locality with Babylon, are *now* standing afar off, for the fear of her torment, bewailing her. Probably they fled, with the islands in the seventh bowl, to this distance. This will be their only salvation. "The strong city" is doubtless an intimation of the real signification of Rome [ $\gamma$ ]  $\rho\acute{o}\mu\eta$ —strength.

VERSES 11-19: "And the merchants of the earth weep and mourn over her, for no man buyeth their merchandise any more; merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet; and all thyine wood, and every vessel of ivory, and every vessel made of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble; and cinnamon, and spice, and incense, and ointment, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and cattle, and sheep; and [merchandise] of horses, and chariots, and bodies, and souls of men. And the fruits which thy soul lusted after are gone from thee, and all things that were dainty and sumptuous are perished from thee, and men shall find them no more at all. The merchants of these things, who were made rich by her, shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment, weeping and mourning; saying, Woe, woe, the great city, she that was arrayed in fine linen and purple and scarlet, and decked with gold and precious stones, and pearls! for in one hour so great riches is made desolate. And every shipmaster, and every one that saileth any whither, and mariners, and as many as

gain their living by sea, stood afar off, and cried out as they looked upon the smoke of her burning, saying, What [city] is like the great city? And cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and mourning, saying, Woe, woe, the great city, wherein were made rich all that had their ships in the sea by reason of her costliness! for in one hour is she made desolate!"

All this may be understood without further explanation.

#### IX. HEAVEN CALLED UPON TO REJOICE OVER HER FALL:

VERSE 20: "Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye saints, and ye apostles, and ye prophets; for God hath judged your judgment on her!"

Heaven here seems to imply the general inhabitants of heaven—the angels. Then come the saints, apostles, and prophets, who are not risen, have not attained to full glory, but are in paradise. They also are called upon to rejoice over Babylon's fall, hence they must, like those souls under the altar,<sup>1</sup> be in a conscious state, and be interested in the things concerning God's work on earth. "For God hath judged your judgment on her," indicates that the angels in heaven, the saints, the apostles, and the prophets long ago desired that this detestable, blood-thirsty woman be judged. God's judgment may often seem to tarry, but when it comes it will be all the more manifest in its righteous severity.

X. THE SUDDENNESS OF HER FALL ILLUSTRATED.—She shall not, like the great river Euphrates, gradually decrease and thus come to an end, as many suppose. Indeed, signs of her approaching fall may beforehand show themselves, as we in our time see, that she has already lost considerably in respect to influence and power. This will not be the manner of her downfall. Hear what the Lord tells us.

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<sup>1</sup> Rev. vi, 9.



VERSE 21: "And a strong angel took up a stone as it were a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with a mighty fall shall Babylon, the great city, be cast down, and shall be found no more at all."

It is a sudden fall, coming with amazing violence in one day, and is thus a total and irreparable destruction.

#### XI. WHAT NO MORE SHALL BE HEARD AND FOUND IN HER:

VERSES 22, 23: "And the voice of harpers and minstrels and flute-players and trumpeters shall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftsman of whatever craft shall be found any more at all in thee; and the voice of a millstone<sup>1</sup> shall be heard no more at all in thee; and the light of a lamp shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the princes of the earth; for with thy sorcery were all the nations deceived."

All these things may now be heard and seen in the Romish Church, and from these things she may all the more readily be known. The Lord is here giving to the members of that Church very plain marks by which they shall know Babylon, and consequently go out from her.

#### XII. WHAT HAS BEEN FOUND IN HER, AND WHY THE GREATNESS OF THIS SIN IS FINALLY MENTIONED AGAIN, is:

VERSE 24: "And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that have been slain upon the earth."

This evidently means that during the time of her existence she has actually been the chief murderous weapon of the adversary, being more or less guilty of the blood of all who, during her existence, have been murdered.

#### XIII. GREAT JUBILATION IN HEAVEN OVER BABYLON'S FALL.

REV. XIX, 1-5: "After these things I heard as it were a great voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, Hallelu-

<sup>1</sup> Compare Jer. xxv, 10.

jah: Salvation and glory and power belong to our God: for true and righteous are his judgments; for he hath judged the great harlot, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and he hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand. And a second time they say, Hallelujah. And her smoke goeth up for ever and ever. And the four and twenty elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God that sitteth on the throne, saying, Amen; Hallelujah. And a voice came from the throne, saying, Give praise to our God, all ye his servants, ye that fear him, the small and the great!"

That Babylon's fall is a very important event, appears from the fact that it is introduced four times successively. (1) The time of her fall is indicated in the seventh bowl.<sup>1</sup> (2) Her nature, her relation to the beast, and the latter's activity in causing her fall, are more clearly explained to John.<sup>2</sup> (3) Her fall is especially proclaimed to the earth by a mighty angel from heaven.<sup>3</sup> (4) In the text before us is described the great jubilee in heaven over her fall. Of these four presentations this last is the one of highest and most comprehensive signification. Very important, also, is

#### THE FURTHER HISTORY IMMEDIATELY CONNECTED WITH THIS.

VERSES 6-8: "And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunders, saying, Hallelujah: for the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigneth! Let us rejoice and be exceeding glad, and let us give the glory unto him! for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And it was given unto her that she should array herself in fine linen, bright [and] pure: for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints."

The great multitude here, as in verse 1, whose voice John heard, is doubtless the same as the ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands of angels

<sup>1</sup> Rev. xvi, 19.

<sup>2</sup> Rev. xvii.

<sup>3</sup> Rev. xviii.

round about the throne.<sup>1</sup> We see in this three-fold voice, "as of a great multitude, as of many waters, and as of mighty thunders," a clear, powerful, and awe-inspiring declaration in regard to what has just happened, and what may consequently further be expected, namely: that God, through his judgment over the great harlot, has manifested his power of dominion; and that he shall further manifest this power against his enemies, over which heaven breaks forth with rejoicing, shouting, and high praises of God. With this declaration there are also some other very important facts briefly mentioned: 1. The time of the coming of Christ for the resurrection, transformation, and carrying home of his own, is now close at hand. The marriage of the Lamb is come. The "apostasy," which shall precede the Lord's coming,<sup>2</sup> has really occurred with the fall of Babylon. From that time, therefore, Christ's appearance may be hourly expected. 2. His wife hath made herself ready. This making ready or preparing is of God, and is manifestly the putting on of the new, spiritual, glorious, and incorruptible body by the resurrection and transformation at the coming of Christ.<sup>3</sup> 3. The garment given to her, with which she should array herself—the fine linen, bright and pure—is the righteousness of the saints, *i. e.*, the different grades of glory given to them by the Lord as a recompense according to their works,<sup>4</sup> in proportion as they built upon the foundation of Christ.<sup>5</sup> Consequently there is here implied the reckoning of the Lord with his servants, and the bestowing of glory according to their works, taking place at this coming of the Lord.<sup>6</sup>

VERSES 9, 10: "And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are bidden to the marriage supper of the Lamb."

<sup>1</sup> Rev. v, 11; Heb. xii, 22. <sup>2</sup> 2 Thess. iii. 3. <sup>3</sup> John xiv, 3; Phil. iii, 20, 21; 1 Thess. iv, 16, 17; 1 Cor. xv, 42-44, 52-54. <sup>4</sup> 1 Cor. xv, 41. <sup>5</sup> 1 Cor. iii, 12-14. <sup>6</sup> Matt. xxv, 14-30; Luke xix, 12-26.

These are they who are obedient to Christ's call and obtain a wedding garment, for not all who suppose they have a right to the marriage supper have a wedding garment. Not all of the servants with whom the Lord shall reckon will hear these words of his addressed to them: "Well done, good and faithful servant, . . . enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." Happy, therefore, those that hear this confirmation of their calling! "And he said unto me, these are true words of God." They are not only the sentiment of the angel or of John, but God is speaking this to men. "And I fell down before his feet to worship him: And he saith unto me, See thou do it not. I am a fellow-servant with thee and with thy brethren that hold the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."

As the greater part of this chapter, just considered, treats mainly of the coming of the Lord for the taking away of his faithful from the earth, so does the part now following describe his coming for the destruction of the wicked from the earth; hence we have here the same closing history of our Period, already seen from three different standpoints, in the treble, base, and alto, now further presented to us from the standpoint of the tenor.

VERSES 11-13: "And I saw the heaven opened; and behold, a white horse, and he that sat thereon, called Faithful and True; and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. And his eyes [are] a flame of fire, and upon his head [are] many diadems; and he hath a name written which no one knoweth but he himself. And he [is] arrayed in a garment sprinkled with blood; and his name is called the Word of God."

Who this is thus coming from heaven we all know. It is Christ, who comes to judge and to make war in righteousness. He comes to judge the nations in Har-mageddon or Valley of Jehoshaphat. He comes to make

war with the antichrist and his armies gathered there. Why his garment is sprinkled with blood is explained in verse 15: "And he treadeth the wine-press of the fierceness of the wrath of Almighty God;" as also the prophet plainly says:<sup>1</sup> "Wherefore [art thou] red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the wine-fat? I have trodden the wine-press alone; and of the people [there was] none with me: for I will tread them in my anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment. For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come. . . . I will tread down the people in mine anger, and make them drunk in my fury, and I will bring down their strength to the earth."

VERSES 14, 15: "And the armies which are in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white [and] pure. And out of his mouth proceeded a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations."

That these armies of heaven are the risen and transformed believers, who, after having in the Lord's reckoning with them received their recompense, and are now coming with the Lord for the judgment of the wicked, appears from the following testimony:<sup>2</sup> "These—the beasts and the kings—shall war against the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them, for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings; and they that are with him [are] called and chosen and faithful." Enoch's prophecy also says: "Behold, the Lord came with ten thousands of his holy ones, to execute judgment upon all, and to convict all the ungodly of all their works of ungodliness which they have ungodly wrought, and of all the hard things which the ungodly sinners have spoken against him."<sup>3</sup> David says: "Thy people are volunteers in the day of thy warfare, in beauty and holiness. Thou hast

<sup>1</sup> Isa. lx, 2-6. <sup>2</sup> Rev. xvii, 14. <sup>3</sup> Jude 14, 15.

more dew of thy youth than the womb of the morning. The Lord at thy right hand shall smite kings in the day of his wrath. He shall judge among the heathen. He shall make it full of dead bodies. He shall smite the head over many countries (the antichrist)."<sup>1</sup> Hence it is promised to the believer: "When the wicked are cut off, thou shalt see it."<sup>2</sup> Joined with the Lord in this most eminent position, and clad with beauty and holiness, the believers shall be eye-witnesses of this supreme event.

"And he shall rule them with a rod of iron." The beginning of this ruling of the nations of the earth has just been made by judging the wicked part of them with the sword proceeding out of Christ's mouth. The further ruling of them applies to that part that shall give glory to God and remain alive on earth, and from whom the earth shall again be populated (after Christ's next coming). This ruling with a rod of iron implies force and severity—terrible as with banners—and shall be shared with the glorified believers in heaven.<sup>3</sup>

VERSE 16: "And he hath on his garment and on his thigh a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords."

The name of Christ, which expresses his dignity and eminence above all other rulers and lords, shines forth from his garment and from above his thigh, the place of the girdle.

VERSES 17, 18: "And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the birds that fly in mid-heaven, Come [and] be gathered together unto the great supper of God: that ye may eat the flesh of kings and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses and of them that sit thereon, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond and small and great."

That those which shall perish here in this judgment

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<sup>1</sup> Psa. cx, 3-6, in the Hebrew.    <sup>2</sup> Psa. xxvii, 34.    <sup>3</sup> Rev. xii, 5; ii, 26, 27.

of the wine-press of the fierce wrath of God, are not spirits, but really men of the different ranks here named, is clearly seen from the repeated term "flesh," and from the calling together of all the birds to eat this flesh.

VERSE 19: "And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat upon the horse, and against his army."

This is the gathering in Harmageddon. Here the beast is personally present, and with him the kings of the earth under their highest leader, the man of sin, or antichrist. They have gathered themselves there to take away the dominion of this world from him who has bought men for a high price, and to whom God has for this reason given the nations for his inheritance and the ends of the earth for his possession. These united armies from all nations of the earth, inspired by the two demons—the beast and the false prophet—purpose to take away from our Lord Jesus Christ the kingdom of this world, and to secure it for the old prince of this world, the devil. This is their plan. This is what the devil intended from the beginning, by the introduction of sin. Accordingly, it is now a war against Christ and his people, who, by Christ's sacrificial death, have obtained dominion over the world.<sup>1</sup> In the Old World, at that time, all nations and kingdoms will be won for the party of Satan; hence it is not unlikely that this gathering of the kings of the earth and their armies "between the seas [and] the glorious holy mountain,"<sup>2</sup> may purpose attempting from there with this immense power of armies the subjection of the new world, the place of refuge of the Church. That the demoniac chiefs of these armies of beastly men shall set their purpose thus high, can scarcely be doubted;<sup>3</sup> and if God did not set bounds to these wanton proceedings, the aim proposed would be reached;

<sup>1</sup> John xii, 31-33.

<sup>2</sup> Dan. xi, 45.

<sup>3</sup> Rev. xvi, 14.

but here the Lord cuts short this wicked work and ends the great contest. Christ appears with his armies and decides the contest. He alone will do it; his armies shall only be spectators.<sup>1</sup> He shall slay the antichrist with the breath (sword) of his mouth, and bring to naught by the manifestation of his presence,<sup>2</sup> or as is further described in

VERSES 20, 21: "And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought the signs in his sight, wherewith he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshiped his image: they twain were cast alive into the lake of fire that burneth with brimstone: and the rest were killed with the sword of him that sat upon the horse [even the sword] which came forth out of his mouth: and all the birds were filled with their flesh."

Here is fulfilled the prophecy concerning the beast: "And he goeth into perdition"—after having come up out of the abyss and remained a short time on earth.<sup>3</sup> With him goes also his co-partner, the false prophet. Both are cast alive, just as they are into the lake of fire. "The rest" who were killed with the sword proceeding from the mouth of the Lord, are the men constituting the body of the beast, with the man forming its seventh head—the antichrist. The birds shall eat their flesh, and whatever remains, as also the locality of this wine-press, shall be preserved as a warning for all future times of the earth's duration.<sup>4</sup>

THE SAME JUDGMENT AS DESCRIBED BY ISAIAH —  
 "For behold, the Lord cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain. In that day the Lord with his sore and great and strong sword shall punish leviathan the straight serpent, and leviathan the crooked serpent, and he shall slay the

<sup>1</sup> Isa. lxiii, 3; Psa. xxxvii, 34.  
 xvii, 8, 11.

<sup>4</sup> Isa. lvi, 23, 24.

<sup>2</sup> 2 Thess. ii, 8.

<sup>3</sup> Rev.



monster that is in the sea.”<sup>1</sup> The straight serpent is that demon, called the beast, which promotes evil in a straight-forward course. The crooked serpent is that demon called the false prophet, who promotes evil in crooked ways, hiding the evil under the form of good. The monster in the sea is the body of the beast, consisting of men, and existing in the sea of nations, and is here slain. Jesus describes this judgment thus: “But those, mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me.”<sup>2</sup>

THE ORDER OF EVENTS FROM THE SEVENTH BOWL TO THE END OF THIS CHAPTER.—Up to the end of the seventh bowl this order is clearly stated, but from that time to the coming of the Lord, and to the destruction of the wicked, there is no specified order of events. We have only general indications through the figure of the sixth seal,<sup>3</sup> also, in what is said of the two witnesses,<sup>4</sup> of the dragon,<sup>5</sup> of the beast,<sup>6</sup> of the false prophet,<sup>7</sup> and by the indications of the eternal Gospel.<sup>8</sup> All these representations point to very sad circumstances brought about by the victory of the Socialists in the seventh bowl. Great misery, violence, and wars seem to be the order of the day, as we learn from our Lord.<sup>9</sup> In these wars some men will make themselves conspicuous, and especially one considered as a vile person, but who by flatteries shall obtain the kingdom, and, finally, appear as that little horn which subdues the three horns existing before him. A specification of these warlike events is given in Daniel, Chapter xi, from the 20th verse (also partly in Chapter viii). Only future history will fully explain these specifications.

THE ORDER OF EVENTS ON THE DAY OF THE LORD may be established with more certainty. With the

<sup>1</sup> Isa. xxvi, 21; xxvii, 1; see the Hebrew.

xix, 27.

<sup>3</sup> Rev. vi, 9-11.

<sup>4</sup> Chap. xi, 3-12.

<sup>5</sup> Chap. xii,

13-17. <sup>6</sup> Chap. xiii, 7-10.

<sup>7</sup> Chap. xiii, 15-17.

<sup>8</sup> Chap.

xiv, 6-12.

<sup>9</sup> Matt. xxiv, 6-9.

conquest of Jerusalem by the antichrist, and the gathering of his armies between the seas and the glorious holy mountain, the immediate nearness of the day of the Lord is clearly shown. This day itself, however, begins thus: "The sun will be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken. And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven; and then shall the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send forth his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect—those fallen asleep, and those still alive—from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other."<sup>1</sup> The gathering of the believers, which implies their resurrection, transformation, and meeting of the Lord in the air, takes place at the very beginning of this great day. The wicked shall see all this, and, therefore, be exceedingly terrified.<sup>2</sup> The reckoning of the Lord with his servants will be the next thing in order. Then the marriage and the marriage supper. After that the Lord will appear with his people for the destruction of the wicked, and then begins the reign with Christ, as priests of God over the earth.

Thus, the coming of the Lord for the judgment of the wicked is not a second coming, but simply an act immediately connected with the resurrection and transformation of the believers, taking place on this same great day of God. As we saw in the Alto,<sup>3</sup> when the killed witnesses arose from the dead, and went up to heaven, there were in that same hour the seven thousand names of men killed—the wicked. As we saw in the Treble,<sup>4</sup> how, at the coming of the Son of man from heaven, the wheat was first harvested, and directly after-

<sup>1</sup> Verses 29-31.

<sup>2</sup> Rev. xi, 11; vi, 12-17.

<sup>3</sup> Chap. xi,

12-13. <sup>4</sup> Chap. xiv, 14-20.

ward the vine of the earth, and its clusters—the wicked—cast into the wine-press and trodden, so are, in this last chapter of the Tenor, the believers first made ready with the glorious apparel to meet their coming Lord. Then follows the marriage and its supper, and immediately after their appearance with the Lord, for the judgment or destruction of the wicked.

SHORT RÉSUMÉ OF THE TENOR.—Its representation begins after the sixth trumpet, connecting with Chapter X, where that strong angel comes down out of heaven, arrayed with a cloud, and the rainbow upon his head; whose face was as the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire, and having in his hand a little book open, etc. With the Tenor begins a great turning of things in the history of the Church of God. In opposition to the darkness, which the adversary—according to the representation of the Alto—so successfully unfolded in the Church of God from the times of the apostles to the sixth trumpet, and in opposition to death, which, according to the representation of the Base, the fourth rider was about to unfold in connection with darkness, we are shown by the Tenor, in the first four bowls, an extraordinary progress and a glorious victory in the Church of God. In the first bowl the element of life in the Church is stirred up and united for a common attack and relentless contest against the darkness, and death-threatening impurities brought into the Church by the enemy. The result of this contest was a purified element of life. In the second bowl this purified element, or Christianity, is carried over into the worldly nations, who, because they received it with unconverted hearts, became thereby Christians only in form and appearance, without spiritual life. In the third bowl the blood of the martyrs of Christ, shed during the two preceding bowls, is avenged. This also teaches the princes and the nations, by long and severe judgments of bloodshed, religious toleration, or liberty of conscience.

Without these would the victory of the Church of God in this Division of our Period indeed have been very defective. In the fourth bowl the Church of God attains to the highest stage of power and victory to which she ever attained for her sun-nature unfolds such an extraordinary degree of heat that it becomes a plague to men. In the fifth bowl the beast makes an attempt to reveal to the world, and to the Church, its true inward nature, by which it brings upon itself great toil and trouble. In the sixth bowl is, on the one hand, the overflowing great river Euphrates caused to dry up to prepare the way for the future rulers in the kingdom of God on earth. On the other hand are here the three chief leaders of the adversary party, through the spirits they send forth, resuming with renewed strength and energy the great contest, which, in the form here begun, comes to an end at the great day of the Lord, which is not very far distant.

The seventh bowl, the fulfillment of the six, forms the beginning of a new Division of our Period, generally represented by the fifth seal. The victory of the Socialists will take place first, which is the falling away or apostasy.<sup>1</sup> Out of the failure of this socialistic theory will then be unfolded a full and real antichristianity with the antichrist in person as chief leader. The chapters XVII, XVIII, and XIX of the Revelation show plainly how closely the day of the Lord is connected with the seventh bowl.

As the Tenor fills up the space and time between the sixth and seventh trumpets, it is shut in by these two, forming thus, within the Revelation, a little revelation by itself, represented by that little open book with the renewed charge to prophesy again.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 2 Thess. ii, 3.    <sup>2</sup> Rev. x, 2, 11.



THE  
CLOSING PART OF THE REVELATION:

A  
Seventh Division and New Times.

THE  
SEASONS OF REFRESHING FROM THE  
PRESENCE OF THE LORD,

FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE MILLENNIUM TO THE  
FINAL JUDGMENT, AND THE NEW HEAVEN  
AND THE NEW EARTH.

THE  
CLOSING PART OF THE REVELATION  
AND  
NEW TIMES.

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1.—THE SEASONS OF REFRESHING FROM THE  
PRESENCE OF THE LORD.

REV. XX, 1-3: "And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, the old serpent, which is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, and cast him into the abyss, and shut [it], and sealed [it] over him, that he should deceive the nations no more, until the thousand years should be finished: After this he must be loosed for a little time."

These three verses stand in direct connection with the judgment of the wicked, and of the two greatest leaders in the work of Satan in the preceding chapter. With the judgment of these may safely be expected the judgment of Satan himself, which is here described. It may seem strange to many that this judgment of Satan is not so severe as that of the beast and the false prophet, because Satan is considered the greater sinner. Indeed, he is the older sinner, hence, the old serpent; but this is no proof that he is the greater sinner. Though among men Adam is the oldest sinner, yet he is not the greatest sinner; thus is it with these three demons. Each receives according to his works, and it remains an incontrovertible fact, that God is a just judge, acting with impartiality. Satan has not sinned in such

a measure as the beast and the false prophet, and, therefore, does not receive their punishment, but the one which before this, the beast suffered, when it was cast into the abyss, out of which it will come again on earth. Consequently, then, Satan is seized by an angel coming from heaven, bound for a thousand years, cast into the abyss, shut up, and a seal set upon him. He shall cease for a thousand years to deceive the nations. After the end of this term, God will again give him another trial and let him live on earth once more. Truly, God's long suffering toward this fallen angel is very great!

VERSES 4-6: "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and the souls of them that had been beheaded<sup>1</sup> for the testimony of Jesus, and for the word of God, and such as worshiped not the beast, neither his image, and received not the mark upon their forehead and upon their hand; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. The rest of the dead lived not, until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: over these the second death has no power; but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years."

These verses stand in direct connection with the foregoing chapter. As we are entering new times, quite different from the preceding, there is communicated to us the further history of those whom the Lord carried into the heavenly mansions in the preceding chapter. These John sees in heaven, assuming their new positions: "He saw thrones, and they sat upon them," etc. The new times begin with the dominion of the risen and transformed believers as priests of God and of Christ.

It will be noticed that those risen believers are first mentioned who for their faithfulness to Jesus, and for the Word of God, were killed as the last martyrs by the beast and its adherents.<sup>2</sup> In this we see the fulfillment

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<sup>1</sup> See note 27.    <sup>2</sup> Rev. xi, 7-12.



of the Word of the Lord, stating that in reckoning with his servants, and giving to each his recompense, the last will receive their recompense first, and so the last will be first, and the first last.<sup>1</sup> It is self-evident that all others, who at any time during the beast's existence, did not worship it, but held faithfully to the Word of God and to the testimony of Jesus, will likewise share in this dominion as priests of God and of Christ.

The expression, "judgment," must be understood in the sense in which it is found in the Old Testament, especially in the book of Judges, and as Jesus uses it, when he says to his disciples: "Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed me, in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."<sup>2</sup> Judging has here the signification of reigning. In fact, what our text says of the risen and transformed believers, that "judgment" was given unto them, is the literal fulfillment of the words of the Lord, where the risen and transformed believers from Israel shall exercise from their position in heaven over Israel on earth such a judging and directing influence; as, also, the glorified believers from the Gentiles shall exercise over the Gentile nations on earth.<sup>3</sup> To this Paul refers, when he says: "Know ye not that the saints shall judge the world?"<sup>4</sup> They judge and reign evidently not independently, but with Christ. They sit on their thrones with him, and in this way will the earth be directed and governed by the Lord and the glorified saints from heaven. The entering of the saints into such glory is called "the manifestation of the sons of God."<sup>5</sup> Our text says of it: "This is the first resurrection," also described and referred to in other places,<sup>6</sup> and

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<sup>1</sup> Matt. xx, 1-16.<sup>2</sup> Matt. xix, 28.<sup>3</sup> Rev. ii, 26, 28.<sup>4</sup> 1 Cor. vi, 2.<sup>5</sup> Rom. viii, 19.<sup>6</sup> Luke xiv, 14; John xi, 24; 1 Cor. xv, 12-57; 1 Thes. iv, 14-17.

in which only such have a part who have the spirit of Christ, and thus belong to him.<sup>1</sup> "The rest of the dead" do consequently not arise here, which clearly shows that that general judgment where all the dead, great and small, are judged, does not take place here, but later. To that general or final judgment do the words point: "Over these—of the first resurrection—the second death has no power." According to this there is another judgment to come, where all shall appear, and where a separation will take place, those on the one hand departing into the second death, and on the other hand entering into eternal life.<sup>2</sup> We shall soon see more about this separation.

WHAT THESE NEW TIMES ARE CALLED.—1. In regard to their duration the Latin term, Millennium—a thousand years—has been applied to them. (This Millennium begins directly after Christ's appearance for the destruction of the wicked, and with the sounding of the seventh trumpet.<sup>3</sup>) 2. In regard to the labor and reign of sin, of six thousand years, the "one thousand years' Sabbath," hence, called by the Scriptures: "The seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord." "The times of restoration of all things."<sup>4</sup> "The deliverance of the creation from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God," for which not only the whole creation is groaning and travailing in pain until now, but, also, we, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body.<sup>5</sup>

THE GENERAL CHARACTER OF THESE NEW TIMES.—

1. Concerning men, the population of the earth here consists of the remnant left from the destruction of the wicked.<sup>6</sup> Hence that restoration of Israel is not only with sinews, flesh, and skin, but is also penetrated by the

<sup>1</sup> Rom. viii, 9.    <sup>2</sup> Matt. xxv, 46.    <sup>3</sup> Rev. xi, 15.    <sup>4</sup> Acts iii, 19-21.    <sup>5</sup> Rom. viii, 19-23.    <sup>6</sup> Rev. xi, 13; Isa. iv, 3; x, 20-23; Jer. xxxi, 27-40; Acts xv, 16, 17.

Spirit of God, *i. e.*, renewed by the Spirit of God.<sup>1</sup> As such a people it will assume the first position among the nations of the earth. The Lord shall make it here a name and a praise among all the people of the earth.<sup>2</sup> It shall inhabit Canaan and Jerusalem. The temple and ordinances of Ezekiel xl to xlviii belong to these times. Sacrifices will again be offered,<sup>3</sup> though not as types, but in the manner of the Lord's-supper—in remembrance of Christ's sacrifice. As Satan and his evil host shall be banished from the position which they now occupy in the heavenly region, and instead of them the glorified Church, as priests of God and of Christ, shall occupy that position, and exercise a good and holy influence over the earth, so may this truly be called a new heaven, wherein dwelleth righteousness;<sup>4</sup> and through this, as also through that deliverance of the creation from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God, the earth, like the heaven, may justly be called new. The nations will be at peace,<sup>5</sup> likewise the animals.<sup>6</sup> The light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days.<sup>7</sup> Hence, there will be a much increased fruitfulness in the earth.<sup>8</sup> The intellectual condition will also greatly excel the present one.<sup>9</sup> Men will live to such an age that a hundred years will still appear the age of youth. As the state of things is thus described: "Mercy and truth have met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other. Truth springs up out of the earth, and righteousness looks down from heaven."<sup>10</sup> These are the new heavens and the new earth referred to by Peter and Isaiah,<sup>11</sup> of which

<sup>1</sup> Ezek. xxxvii, 9-14.

<sup>2</sup> Zep. iii, 20; Jer. xxxiii, 9.

<sup>3</sup> Zech. xiv, 16-24; Jer. xxxiii, 18-26. <sup>4</sup> 2 Pet. iii, 13. <sup>5</sup> Isa.

ii, 1-5. <sup>6</sup> Isa. xi, 6-10. <sup>7</sup> Isa. xxx, 26. <sup>8</sup> Isa. xxx, 1,

2, 7; Joel iii, 23; Zech. viii, 11-13. <sup>9</sup> Isa. xi, 9 liv, 13;

Heb. viii, 11. <sup>10</sup> Isa. lxv, 20; Psa. lxxxv, 10, 11. <sup>11</sup> 2 Pet.

iii, 13; Isa. lxv, 17-25; lxvi, 22.

we remarked that they should be distinguished from those appearing after the final judgment, and described in Chapter xxi.

VERSES 7-10: "And when the thousand years are finished, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall come forth to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to the war: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up over the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city; and fire came down out of heaven and devoured them. And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where are also the beast and the false prophet; and they shall be tormented day and night forever and ever."

This is a plain representation of the history, as it shall come to pass a thousand years later, when Satan is allowed to come out of his prison and be again on earth. Here he behaves no better than the beast, when it was allowed to come out of its prison; he (Satan) begins to pursue his old course again; he attempts anew to bring the whole world under his dominion, and is for this cast into the same place of punishment as the beast and the false prophet, viz., into the lake of fire and brimstone. There he will be in a condition perfectly in accordance with his mind and manner of action. It may appear as if here new distress was coming over the saints of God, for preparations are made for a battle in the camp near Jerusalem. An immense army, under the leadership of the prince Gog, at the instigation of Satan, is ready to encompass the saints; but God's people need not fight, the Lord is fighting for them. Fire falls from heaven, and devours their enemies. These peoples, deceived by Satan, are evidently the same which the prophet Ezekiel describes: Gog, the land Magog, the prince of Rosh (*i. e.*, Russia), Meshech and Tubal, with whom follow Persians, Ethiopians, Libyans, Gomer, and all his bands,

the house of Togarmah of the north quarters, and all his bands, and many other people.<sup>1</sup> These peoples are named according to their original ancestry.<sup>2</sup> There follows now a much greater event:

## 2.—THE FINAL JUDGMENT.

VERSE 11: "And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat upon it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them."

Hitherto the prophecy has given us certain dates. Even the duration of the great Sabbath and the captivity of Satan from the time of the Lord's coming is determined by a certain number of years; but now we come all at once to the end of the world, where the earth and the material heaven, created on the second and fourth days,<sup>3</sup> and existing up to this time, are passing away, and here no date is given.

THE TIME WHEN THIS EVENT TAKES PLACE.—Can it be that immediately after the reign of a thousand years the end of the world will come? We do not believe it. From Ezekiel<sup>4</sup> it may be seen that the end of the world does not yet take place, for after the destruction of Gog and Magog the Israelites will live on earth still longer, as for *seven* years they shall take no wood out of the field, nor cut down any out of the forest, but shall burn the weapons of their slain enemies. The declarations of the Scripture which refer to this time read literally in the Hebrew: "For ever, from generation to generation."<sup>5</sup> Thus again: "But Judah shall abide for ever, and Jerusalem from generation to generation."<sup>6</sup> Israel has now for almost two thousand years no longer possessed the Holy Land, while it is repeatedly promised to them as a possession forever. How could the possession of it for a thousand years be the fulfillment of this promise? After

<sup>1</sup> Ezek. xxxviii and xxxix. <sup>2</sup> Gen. x. <sup>3</sup> Gen. i. <sup>4</sup> Ezek. xxxix, 9, 10 (see also, verse 22). <sup>5</sup> Isa. xxxiv, 10-17. <sup>6</sup> Joel iii, 20; Ezek. xxxvii, 25-28.

sin and corruption had their dominion over the earth for many thousand years, shall the dominion of righteousness and of deliverance from corruption last only one thousand years? The interval from the first resurrection to the passing away of earth and heaven must, therefore, be a long time. This the prophet directly declares, when referring to those kings of the earth and their armies, slain on that great day of God, that they shall there be gathered as prisoners in the pit, and be shut up in the prison, and after many days—a long time—be visited. He calls the time from their bodily destruction to the passing away of earth and heaven, and the final judgment connected therewith, a *long time*.<sup>1</sup> See, also.<sup>2</sup>

The great white throne is the Lord's appearing for the final judgment. The Lord sits upon this throne, and from his face the earth and the heaven fled away—vanished, dissolved.<sup>3</sup> Matter is not imperishable; it grows old and wears out.<sup>4</sup> So, also, the earth and the heaven connected with it are in their present coarse form not destined to stand forever. They, too, grow old, and when their appointed time comes they will be changed, as the living believers are changed into spiritual-bodily and glorious beings, at Christ's next coming. Christ is the first-fruits, the beginning of the new creation now in progress.

Of that glory which he assumed through the resurrection, and which he now possesses, his believers shall become full partakers. With this unspeakable glory the future abode of Christ and of his redeemed shall be in perfect harmony. Hence not only heaven, but even the earth shall be transformed to that glory, and become the throne of God and of the Lamb with his redeemed.

VERSES 12-15: "And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne; and books were opened:

<sup>1</sup> Isa. xxiv, 25-28.

<sup>2</sup> Isa. lxvi, 22-24.

<sup>3</sup> Mark xiii, 21.

<sup>4</sup> Ps. cii, 26, 27; Heb. i, 10-12.

and another book was opened, which is [the book] of life: and the dead were judged out of the things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. And if any was not found written in the book of life, he was cast into the lake of fire."

This is rather a brief statement of an event of immense importance and consequence. That here the final judgment takes place is very evident. That a resurrection of all, the just and the unjust, immediately precedes this judgment is likewise known by every one who has a general knowledge of the Christian doctrines.<sup>1</sup> There is here nothing mentioned of a resurrection, because this is sufficiently known from other passages. It ought not to be forgotten that before the earth passed away, or while it was passing away, she gave up the prey which death had laid in her. There arose the righteous who lived and died during the Millennium and up to the time of this final judgment.

There arose here, also, all the unjust who lived and died since the beginning of the world. When the Judge on the white throne appeared, all these were waked by his voice and brought before his throne.

The expression "the dead" shows us that here a different judgment is taking place from the one in which living men are specially the ones judged—killed by that sword that goeth out of the mouth of the Lord, and "trodden in the wine-press." The persons who are judged here are not corporeal beings, but rather the souls of those who died, hence dead according to the body. In fact, they can not be men in the natural body, because the earth as a natural body does no more exist; it has passed away.

<sup>1</sup> John v, 28, 29; Acts xxiv, 15; Matt. xii, 41, 42. ~

The plurality "books" is catalogue or record of the sins of the unbelievers, of such as never received the forgiveness of their sins through Christ, and therefore are here judged as impenitents according to all their sins.

"The book of life" contains the names of those who are saved, and hence have received the forgiveness of their sins.

THREE DIVISIONS.—Those who are judged appear as three different divisions, being presented for judgment by three different receivers: *the sea, death, and Hades*. That these are receivers of souls, not of bodies, is self-evident.

HADES is known to us from former explanation<sup>1</sup> as a receiver of the departed souls of the dead. All the souls of those who died in unbelief from the beginning of the human race to the final judgment are reserved therein. From this known receiver, then, we may derive instruction which may lead us to the knowledge of the two others. We have seen that *before* Christ and up to his death Hades or the Sheol of the Hebrews was the only receiver of all the dead, even in these times existing in two divisions, separated by a great gulf.<sup>2</sup> Through the death of Christ these two divisions were still more clearly and forcibly separated—viz., into Hades and Paradise; and to this day there exist besides these two no other receivers of souls.

DEATH AS A RECEIVER OF SOULS.—We must then look for the new additional receiver in the future time, and there we find it at the next coming of Christ. A separation then takes place, appearing under a name which has not occurred before, and also a class of dead are separated, which before that time were never yet separated. The name of this receiver in which that separation shall be made is called "outer darkness." Those who shall be sentenced to this place are called "unprofitable servants,"<sup>3</sup> foolish virgins, professors of Christ with-

<sup>1</sup> See Base, Rev. vi, 8.    <sup>2</sup> Luke xvi, 26.    <sup>3</sup> Matt. xxv, 30.



out a wedding garment and without any garment from Christ,<sup>1</sup> hypocrites,<sup>2</sup> and tares or darnel." These form quite a numerous class,<sup>3</sup> and it ought to be well considered how the Lord represents their separation—viz., that it is accomplished before he executes the judgment upon the wicked. The gathering of the tares and of binding them in bundles, is even done before the gathering of the wheat—the believers.<sup>4</sup> This class is to be well distinguished from the well known wicked, who form the body of the beast, and whose judgment takes place at a later time on that great day of God. There is also *this* difference, that the judgment of the wicked affects their body: their bodies only are destroyed, and their souls go into Hades; while the judgment of the unprofitable servants, hypocrites, etc., affects their souls; for they are cast into "outer darkness." The "outer darkness" is, therefore, a receiver that begins with the reckoning of the Lord with his servants at his next coming. This explains that resurrection in Daniel,<sup>5</sup> which likewise is the first resurrection, where only "many" arise, not "all;" and yet where some awake to everlasting life, and some to shame, to everlasting contempt. This receiver, then, and this class, could by no other name be so appropriately designated as by the appellation "death." There is every appearance of godliness existing, but there is no life.

THE SEA AS A RECEIVER OF SOULS.—As Hades now is represented as a receiver of the unbelievers, and death as a receiver of dead professors of Christ, the explanation of the receiver first named, the sea, seems to be easier. What other class of souls may this one contain than that which shall be saved? These also must appear before this judgment.<sup>6</sup> Their number is not small, as is indicated by the designation *sea*. Their great number ap-

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxii, 11; Rev. xvi, 15; 2 Cor. v, 3. <sup>2</sup> Matt. xxiv, 51; xiii, 42. <sup>3</sup> Matt. vii, 22. <sup>4</sup> Matt. xiii, 30. <sup>5</sup> Dan. xii, 2. <sup>6</sup> 2 Cor. v. 10.

pears from the fact that it includes the population living since the day of the Lord, from those remaining alive and living to the time of the final judgment, and of which population the Scripture testifies that they all know the Lord, and walk in his light.<sup>1</sup> The sea as a receiver of souls would thus assume a similar position as the paradise of to-day, in which the believers fallen asleep abide until the coming of the Lord for the resurrection of their bodies. The locality of this paradise is on high, belonging to the heaven. The *sea* of our text may assume the same locality. Besides being a sea in a figurative sense, as a gathering of many nations, tribes, etc.—a sense we have already seen frequently—it may not be without signification that it is connected with the sea of air. That this sea is the receiver of the pious souls appears plainly from the fact that only death and Hades are cast with their contents into the lake of fire, but not the sea; consequently the latter must contain those who are saved.

The lake of fire is called the second death. The first death is the condition of corruption, unquietness, and torment, as it was brought into the world by sin, and continuing to this day. Now, whosoever shall not in the present time be renewed through Christ, receiving through him the new life of God, will remain in death, and here, in this final judgment, be cast into the lake of fire or second death, where he will be placed in a condition corresponding with his works done here. Any one not found in the book of life—because he has no life—finds his place in the second death, a condition of never ending corruption, unquietness, and torment.

This final judgment taught by Jesus<sup>2</sup> many explain (Matt. xxv, 31–46) as referring to his next coming, where the antichrist and his armies are destroyed; but

<sup>1</sup> Heb. viii, 11; Isa. lx, 3; xlix, 6. <sup>2</sup> John v, 28, 29; Matt. xii, 41, 42; xxv, 31–46.

this is a mistake. For its whole contents show very obviously that it refers to the final judgment, and is different from that contained in the preceding verses 1 to 30, and is, therefore, introduced with a "but," marking the subject thus connected as something different. Compare also carefully all the circumstances and things attending the next coming of Christ, with those attending the final judgment, and there will be no room found for such an event as that of Matt. xxv, 31-46, to come in at Christ's next coming. It is also in full harmony with the character of this great final judgment, that those who arose in the first resurrection be also present. Here is the final and eternal decision of all men. Here are also those judged who have sinned against the believers, to whom that word of the Lord applies: "Inasmuch as ye did it not unto one of these least, ye did it not unto me," etc. The believers have also to be present there, because their Lord is there as judge, and they are connected with him in this office, having, up to this time, reigned with him. From this final judgment another new time and glory begins for them, as from that day the immense multitude of the redeemed of the entire human race will live together on the new earth.

### 3.—THE NEW HEAVEN AND THE NEW EARTH.

REV. XXI, 1: "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth are passed away; and the sea is no more."

The heaven passed away, is the one made on the second day, and in the Hebrew called, expanse, in which God put on the fourth day the sun, the moon, and the innumerable stars. These works of God passed away, as John testifies, and in their stead came forth a new heaven, of which, however, we have no special description. It will be a heaven whose glorious character shall correspond with the new earth. The earth itself shall

be renewed, according to the divine law and power of the resurrection and transformation, into a state of most glorious and incorruptible nature; for in this renewing of heaven and earth things follow the reverse order compared with the first creation.<sup>1</sup> There man was the last work. In the new creation man is the first. Christ is by his resurrection from the dead the first work and the beginning of the new creation; then, after him, those that are his; then, the heaven,<sup>2</sup> and then the earth. Therefore, as Christ—the first fruits—is, so shall those be who follow him. All things shall be renewed conformably to him into a state of divine and heavenly glory. The new earth shall be without sea.<sup>3</sup>

VERSE 2: "And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband."

The term "city" applies as well to her structure and mansions as also to her inhabitants. Both are here coming out of heaven from God upon the new earth to remain forever on it. This city is that "Father's house of many mansions,"<sup>4</sup> of which Jesus says he is going to prepare a place for us (which he is now doing), and from whence he shall come again to take to him those who are his, which will take place at his next coming. There, in this Father's house above, in that large square building (verse 16) shall the glorified Church abide until the final judgment and the time here indicated, when she will, together with this Father's house or holy city, come down upon the new earth. This is the supreme privilege of those who have a part in the first resurrection. They are the first fruits and the Church of the first born.

VERSE 3: "And I heard a great voice out of the throne saying, Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and he shall dwell<sup>5</sup> with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them [and be] their God."

<sup>1</sup> Gen. i.    <sup>2</sup> Gen. i, 14-18 and verses 6-8.    <sup>3</sup> See note 28.  
<sup>4</sup> John xiv, 2, 3.    <sup>5</sup> See note 29.

The idea indicated by the tabernacle to Israel, God's dwelling among his people, and which is even now showing itself by his dwelling in their hearts, shall at that time literally in an outward manner take place. God will personally dwell with his people. The holy city which has the form of the Holy of holies—it being a cube—shall be “the tabernacle of God” with men, and God's people as priests, with the great High-priest will have their dwelling and service there. In the first resurrection, the Lord brings to himself, into the Father's house in heaven, those who are his, but after God has made a new earth, he comes to them, to dwell with them on earth. The tabernacle and the throne of God will be on earth from that time.

VERSE 4: “And he shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and death shall be no more; neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor labor, any more: for the first things are passed away.”

This seems to refer to those who live outside the city, and who were living in the times from the beginning of the Millennium to the final judgment, where with all the blessings they were enjoying in these times, tears, and death, and mourning were not impossible things. The words of our text can not apply to those, who already for thousands of years have enjoyed perfect heavenly happiness, having reigned with Christ in glory. With them were death, tears, etc., things of a time long past; but with those who lived much later, and who reached their full deliverance here, these things lie in near remembrance.

VERSE 5: “And he that sitteth on the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he saith, Write: for these words are faithful and true.”

Who he is that sitteth on the throne, is told in the next verse. Mark the expression. He does not say:

"I create all things new," but "I make all things new." It is a bringing forth of new things out of things already existing. God makes here new things out of those destroyed by sin. He wants men to know, that in regard to this declaration and fact his purpose is faithful and true, yet that it shall remain without effect towards those who shall oppose or refuse such renewing. "All things" means not only a new heaven and a new earth, but also every thing belonging to them.

VERSE 6: "And he said unto me, It is done."

Here is proclaimed the finishing of the entire great work of God, of all that he is making new in heaven and on earth; consequently it is of special significance that he who sits upon the throne calls himself: "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end." It was God's work from the beginning: the admission of sin, and the subsequent restriction of it, as also the renewing of this creation corrupted by sin. In all this God is the beginning and the end, as the Alpha is the first letter of the Greek alphabet, and the Omega (*i. e.*, the great O) the last letter. "I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely." Let no one become discontented or lose courage, or despair, because of the existence of sin. God opens in opposition to this corruption a much greater and richer fountain of salvation free to all who thirst for it; a salvation which is indescribably great, glorious, and imperishable.

VERSES 7, 8: "He that overcometh shall inherit these things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son."

He who by faith in Christ shall free himself from the dominion of sin, and thus overcome the world and Satan, shall inherit all these blessings of the salvation of God and enter at the same time into intimate fellowship with him. "But for the fearful"—such as know the truth

and wish to be saved, but have not courage enough to follow Jesus decidedly—"and unbelieving and abominable"—that practice abominable things—"and murderers, and fornicators, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars"—such as prove themselves false and untrue in any possible way—"their part [shall be] in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone; which is the second death."

#### A DESCRIPTION OF THE CITY, NEW JERUSALEM.

VERSES 9-27: "And there came one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls, who were laden with the seven last plagues; and he spake with me, saying, Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the wife of the Lamb. And he carried me away in the Spirit to a mountain great and high, and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, having the glory of God: her light was like unto a stone most precious, as it were a jasper stone, clear as crystal: having a wall great and high: having twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels; and names written thereon which are [the names] of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel: on the east were three gates; and on the north three gates; and on the south three gates; and on the west three gates. And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. And he that spake with me had for a measure a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof. And the city lieth foursquare, and the length thereof is as great as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs: the length and the breadth and the height thereof are equal. And he measured the wall thereof, a hundred and forty and four cubits [according to] the measure of a man, that is of an angel. And the building of the wall thereof was jasper: and the city was pure gold, like unto pure glass. The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, chalcedony; the fourth, emerald; the fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, topaz; the tenth, chrysoprase;

the eleventh, jacinth; the twelfth, amethyst. And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; each one of the several gates was of one pearl: and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass. And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God, the Almighty, and the Lamb, are the temple thereof. And the city hath no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine upon it; for the glory of God did lighten it, and the lamp thereof [is] the Lamb. And the nations shall walk amidst the light thereof: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory into it, And the gates thereof shall in no wise be shut by the day (for there shall be no night there): and they shall bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it: and there shall in no wise enter into it any thing unclean, or he that maketh an abomination and a lie: but only they which are written in the Lamb's book of life."

In this description the Lord presents to our mind some of the chief features of the greatness and glory of that new Jerusalem, which comes from heaven upon the earth. This is that city for which the believers of old were waiting,<sup>1</sup> and in which they who have part in the first resurrection shall live from the time of this first resurrection forever. John beheld it from a high mountain to which the angel had carried him. It is obvious that the glory of this city is neither earthly nor human, but heavenly and divine. The light beaming forth from her, is compared to the lustre of the most costly stone, to the jasper, *i. e.*, the diamond. Earthly precious stones and gold are here used as figures to compare the heavenly and imperishable material of which this city consists. Notwithstanding all this, these figures are imperfect, as we on earth know of no gold that is transparent, like the gold of the heavenly Jerusalem. Therefore, as heaven is immeasurably higher than the earth, so must the heavenly realities, presented by earthly figures, be so much more superior and glorious. Supremely glorious is the wall which surrounds the city, in which

<sup>1</sup> Heb. xi, 10.



the number three times four, *i. e.*, twelve beams forth conspicuously. The height of the wall is twelve times twelve, *i. e.*, a hundred and forty and four cubits. There are twelve gates in this wall, according to the four parts of the earth, three in each direction, and an angel at each gate. The wall itself consists of twelve foundations, upon which are the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb, and each foundation is adorned with a special precious stone. What a wonderful blending of colors and lustres this must be! Each gate also consists of one pearl.

The city itself is a cube, whose length, breadth, and height are equal, in each direction 1,500 miles. What a building! What a light must proceed from it, as from God's throne and his divine glory, over the whole earth! Mark also the description of the temple. If formerly there was a temple existing in heaven, made necessary by the circumstances of the former earth,<sup>1</sup> these circumstances are changed with the new earth, and such a temple no longer exists. "For the Lord God the Almighty, and the Lamb are the temple thereof." This temple is first for the inhabitants of the city, but also for the whole earth.<sup>2</sup> The redeemed are here so closely connected with God and Christ; they are in such a manner in God and in Christ that no other institution or mediation whatever is necessary or even possible between them. They are one.<sup>3</sup> From this, then, appears the relation of the city in general to the country or to the whole earth. The city has the form of the Holy of holies, and thus assumes the latter's position; consequently the earth assumes the position of the *holy* in regard to this Holy of holies. Thus there is a difference between the inhabitants of this city and those of the country, as there is between the inhabitants of the tem-

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<sup>1</sup> Rev. xv, 5-8; xi, 19.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. xv, 28.

<sup>3</sup> John xvii, 11, 21, 23.

ple in the earthly Jerusalem and those of the land of Canaan. The first named were priests, and lived in the temple, the latter in the Holy Land. Thus shall dwell in new Jerusalem, in its most glorious temple, the priests that came to that priestly office through the first resurrection, and who are, through that resurrection, the nearest to Christ, the first-fruits;<sup>1</sup> and are, therefore, called "a kind of first-fruits,"<sup>2</sup> the body of Christ,<sup>3</sup> the bride, and the wife of the Lamb. In the country shall dwell those who have lived at a later time and are saved—namely, those who shall arise in the general resurrection or final judgment. These are here called "the nations," and shall, as is seen, be organized into kingdoms. Enlightened by the light of the city, they shall walk in that light, and their kings shall bring their glory into it. The preference of the inhabitants of the city to those of the country is here clearly set forth.

REV. XXII, 1: "And he showed me a river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb."

Though the new earth has no sea, yet it has water going forth from the throne of God and the Lamb, no doubt for the benefit of all the earth. A certain likeness of this we see in the Millennium, where water shall flow forth from the house of the Lord.<sup>4</sup> Here in the new Jerusalem is plainly shown how life and blessing shall flow forth for the earth from the throne of God.

VERSE 2: "In the midst of the street thereof, and on either side of the river, was [the] tree of life, bearing twelve [crops of] fruits, yielding its fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree [were] for the healing of the nations."

The river flows through the midst of the street, dividing it into two parts. In the midst of each of these

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<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. xv, 23. <sup>2</sup> James i, 18. <sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. xii, 27. <sup>4</sup> Ezek. xlvii, 1-12; Zech. xiv, 8.

parts of the street grows the tree of life,<sup>1</sup> bringing each month its fruit. Thus food grows in the city, most probably for its inhabitants, while the leaves of this tree serve the nations, the inhabitants outside of the city, as a means of healing. This indicates that even here certain hurt is possible, not, as it seems, among the inhabitants of the city, but among the nations outside of it. As we have remarked before, it is possible for a created being, endowed with free will, to go beyond the limits of right—to transgress; but every transgression will bring to the transgressor a hurt according to the nature and degree of transgression, as our text intimates. That these shall not be great offenses, appears from the manner in which they can be healed: by the leaves of the trees of life in the city. A further proof that the transgressions here shall not be of a very grave nature, is seen from the following:

VERSE 3: "And there shall be no more curse."

People of such a nature as those of the new earth, who have been brought to this eminent and blessed position by sovereign grace and wonderful ways of God and by not a few serious experiences, and being subject to such a dominion as that of Christ and his priests, will not fall into grave transgressions.

"And the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be therein: and his servants shall do him service."

The new earth will be the center of God's government over all his heavenly dominions; and in this government shall glorified *men* be God's nearest servants. Such government is necessary to keep order and prevent sin.

VERSES 4, 5: "And they shall see his face, and his name [shall be] on their foreheads. And there shall be night no

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<sup>1</sup>Gen. ii, 9.

more; and they need no light of a lamp, neither light of sun; for the Lord God shall give them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever."

In the body in which we now are, a man can not see God and live, though every pious soul desires to see him; but when man shall be renewed in his body—*i. e.*, arisen from the dead, he will be able to see God without death or pain; yea, it will be the highest bliss for him to see God.<sup>1</sup> On the new earth is constant light, not from any created means, not even a sun, but from the presence of God's glory. The glorified saints shall not only reign with Christ until the final judgment (during the Millennium), but for ever and ever. As Christ was made a priest forever by an oath, so are those who have part in his priesthood also priests with him forever. Only by this priesthood of Christ may the renewed human race be kept in full happiness and from any possible relapse. On the new earth, however, there shall not be an eternal sameness, but an unfolding of new wonders and glories, as there was from the beginning of the world not a constant oneness and sameness, but one age followed the other, and brought forth constantly new things. So shall it be on the new earth, only on an infinitely more glorious and wonderful scale. Age shall follow age in endless succession in the unfolding of the infinite glories and wonders of God. This is what the original expression "unto the ages of ages" implies and indicates, for which we generally use the expression "for ever and ever."

#### REMARKS CONCERNING THE GREAT CONTEST FROM THE BEGINNING TO ITS CLOSE.

Here the history proper of man, as far as it can be described, and as far as the Word of God describes it, ends. It begins with the entrance of sin, and forms in

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<sup>1</sup> Ps. xlii, 2; Matt. v, 8; Heb. xii, 14.

the progressive contest with the latter, four main Periods in the divine party: The Period of the Promise (the dawn); the Period of the Law (the moon); the Period of the Gospel (the sun); and the Period of the Restoration of all things (the crown of stars). At the close of the *third* Period, the great contest with sin is decided by Christ's coming and the first resurrection, where Satan, the author of sin, is shut up in the abyss for a thousand years. Then follows the restoration of all things, or the Millennium: a reign of peace, righteousness, and happiness on earth, a state of things continuing without real interruption to the final judgment; for Satan, being let loose again from the abyss, causes no real interruption. With the final judgment ceases the existence of men in the flesh, and all those who have lived to that time are separated in two directions: into eternal life and into the second death; into eternal bliss and eternal pain. The Revelation now gives us, in regard to the things thus communicated,

#### SOME CLOSING TESTIMONIES.

##### FIRST, THAT OF THE LORD:

VERSES 6, 7: "And he said unto me, These words are faithful and true: and the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, sent his angel to show unto his servants the things which must shortly come to pass. And behold, I come quickly. Blessed is he that keepeth the words of the prophecy of this book."

The contents of these words are similar to the first lines in the Revelation. We have here a new assurance of the truth of the words of this book, and that it is coming from the same Lord God who of old inspired the prophets, and who sent his angel here to show his servants what immediately shall or must come to pass. It is evident that the Lord is speaking here, as the words added testify: "And, behold, I come quickly," etc.

## SECOND, THAT OF JOHN.

VERSES 8, 9: "And I, John, am he that heard and saw these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which showed me these things. And he saith unto me, See thou do it not; I am a fellow-servant with thee and with thy brethren the prophets, and with them which keep the words of this book: worship God."

As John declares at the beginning of the Revelation who he is, so here, at its close, he declares it in confirmation of its entire contents. As he was once before overawed in such degree by the magnitude of the things communicated to him, that he fell down before the angel to worship him, so is he here inclined to do the same, and receives the same correction. As a witness of God's truth, he conceals not his own weakness, but confesses it openly. Those who keep the words of the Revelation are declared to be co-partners of prophets and angels, as they all thereby serve the same cause, reciprocally, highly esteeming each other, however, not in a way of worship. This belongs alone to God.

## THIRD, AND FINALLY, AGAIN THAT OF THE LORD.

VERSE 10: "And he saith unto me, Seal not up the words of the prophecy of this book; for the time is at hand."

"Sealing" has the signification of "shutting up" or "keeping concealed." This is not the Lord's purpose in regard to the Revelation, but rather that his servants should understand the things signified therein. The time in which these things shall come to pass was already at hand in the time of John.

VERSES 11-15: "He that is unrighteous, let him do unrighteousness still: and he that is filthy let him be made filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him do righteousness still: and he that is holy, let him be made holy still. Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me to render to each man according as his work is. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.

Blessed are they that wash their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter in by the gates into the city. Without are the dogs,<sup>1</sup> and the sorcerers, and the fornicators, and the murderers, and the idolaters, and every one that loveth and maketh a lie."

This whole declaration plainly shows that it is the last address of the Lord Jesus to men. He speaks here to his people. and through them to the world. It is the last testimony from his mouth, directed from heaven to men. God has done all that could be done to make salvation possible and acceptable to man. There was no lack in testimonies, teachings, and warnings. Whosoever shall, notwithstanding all this, pay no attention to God's call, let him do as he pleases. "He that is unrighteous, let him do unrighteousness still," etc.; but on the other hand, "he that is righteous, let him do righteousness still; and he that is holy, let him be made holy still." The Lord shall come unexpectedly, and his reward is with him to render to each man according to his work. He adds to his words the seal of his name: "The Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end." He calls the attention of men to the necessity of their purification, to the means thereof, and to the unspeakable bliss thus presented to them, naming the chief characters which shall be excluded from this bliss.

VERSE 16: "I, Jesus, have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things for the Churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, the bright, the morning star."

Here we see from whom the things represented in this Revelation come, namely from Jesus, who appears for the confirmation of their genuineness, calling himself by the name by which he is generally known. He has received this Revelation from God,<sup>2</sup> and had its contents made known to John by the ministration of an angel whom he sent for this purpose. Now, that this angel

<sup>1</sup> Matt. vii, 6; Psal. xx, 16; Phil. iii, 2.

<sup>2</sup> Rev. i, 1.

has faithfully fulfilled his charge, as John has his, and that thus the Revelation, as written by John, is really just what Jesus would have it to be, is likewise plainly contained in this testimony of Jesus. As John was well known in those Churches, to which he had to send the Revelation, they could safely accept the divine origin of that book, without the shadow of a doubt.

The signification of "the root and the offspring of David," we have already explained above.<sup>1</sup> It has reference to the promise of everlasting dominion made to the house of David. If Jesus in connection with this dignity of King calls himself further "the bright, the morning star," he therewith designates his character of Light, and his future ascent as Light and King over the earth in the breaking forth of that glorious day. The morning star stands in close relation to the rising of the sun. He is the proclaimer of the day, appearing only a short time before the sun. The designation "the bright morning star"<sup>2</sup> signifies, therefore, that appearing of Christ in the world where he comes to waken and to transform those that are his. There the glorious day is announced, its dawn begins to appear, and the morning star really arises in the hearts of Christ's believers.<sup>3</sup> As such a star, arising out of Jacob, Christ shall here destroy the wicked—all the sons of turmoil.<sup>4</sup> This will occur first, and before the day here spoken of shall fully appear. This day in its full light of the Sun<sup>5</sup> shall actually begin with the full establishment of Christ's kingdom on earth, hence with the sounding of the seventh trumpet,<sup>6</sup> which proclaims the establishment of this kingdom or Millennium. From this morning of a new day begins the dominion of the glorified believers over all their enemies, and over those who constitute the attendance of the fourth rider—Hades.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rev. v, 5. <sup>2</sup> See note 30. <sup>3</sup> 2 Pet. i, 19. <sup>4</sup> Num. xxiv, 17, in the Hebrew. <sup>5</sup> Mal. iv, 2. <sup>6</sup> Rev. xi, 15-19. <sup>7</sup> Rev. vi, 7; Psal. xlix, 15.



## AN INVITATION TO ALL MEN:

VERSE 17: "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And he that heareth, let him say, Come. And he that is athirst, let him come: he that will, let him take the water of life freely."

The Spirit of Jesus in his followers prompts them to invite their fellowmen to the enjoyment of the blessings that are in Jesus. Those that hear this invitation are also called upon to make it known to others. Every one athirst is invited to come, and he who will, may take the water of life—the life-imparting gift of God—without price.

## A WARNING TO MEN:

VERSES 18, 19: "I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto them, God shall add unto him the plagues which are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the tree of life, and out of the holy city, which are written in this book."

VERSE 20: "He which testifieth these things saith, Yea: I come quickly."

"Amen: come, Lord Jesus." These last words are evidently a hearty assent of John to the words of Jesus. The following closing words are also John's:

## VERSE 21:

"The grace of our Lord Jesus be with the saints. Amen."

# NOTES,

## Short Representation of the Entire Revelation,

AND

## INDEX OF CONTENTS

ACCORDING TO ITS REGULAR ORDER OF CHAPTERS,

SHOWING

THE SUMMARY AND THE PLACE OF EXPLANATION OF  
ANY VERSE.

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### NOTES TO THE INTRODUCTION AND THE TREBLE.

NOTE 1, page 10.—*Lamb*. This is the first time that Christ is thus represented in the Revelation, but the Greek has not “Lamb,” *ἀμνός*, as in John i, 29, 36, but *ἀρνίον*, “a little Lamb.” The Holy Spirit chooses this term throughout the Revelation, doubtless because gentleness and loveliness are much better expressed by a “little lamb” than by one nearer full grown. To the close observer it must appear strange that Christ is so often presented under this figure and title in the Revelation; for we find it not only when mention is made of his sacrifice, but as a general title, where the name Christ or Lord might just as well be expected, as in chapter vi, 16; xix, 7; xiii, 8, etc. By this Christ is presented to us in his creatural side, in his lowest condescension, taking away the sins of the world; hence as the author of salvation, as he who was dead, and lives. On the other hand, there is in this figure—by the seven horns and the seven eyes—presented the fullness of the power and wisdom of God and the union of the divine with the creatural.

NOTE 2, page 40.—The form of a dragon has been described as resembling that of a crocodile or alligator, only of

larger size, and furnished with claws and wings like those of a bat. It was not only doubted, but positively denied that such creatures ever existed, until geology proved their existence beyond any doubt by the discovery of their fossil remains. Hugh Miller, in his "Testimony of the Rocks" (American edition, Gould & Lincoln, page 109), speaks of the fossils of such dragons in forms as strange as were ever imagined by romancers of the Middle Ages. Some of these dragons were of considerable size. The wings of a Pterodactyl of the chalk, in the possession of Mr. Bowerbank, must have had a spread of about eighteen feet. Those of a recently discovered Pterodactyl of the Green sand had a spread of not less than twenty-seven feet.

NOTE 3, page 41.—*Diadem*, from *dia deo*, to bind round: a white band or fillet, worn by kings around their usual head-dress; a sign of kingly dignity.

NOTE 4, page 51.—The antichrist has many designations which place his character, position, and work in a clearer light. He is called:

(1.) The antichrist (1 John ii, 18), from the Greek word *anti*, signifying "against, in place of," etc.; hence one who is against Christ, and setting himself up in his place.

(2.) Another who shall come in his own name, and whom the Jews will receive (John v, 43).

(3.) The liar (1 John ii, 22).

(4.) The deceiver (2 John 7).

(5.) The man of sin (2 Thess. ii, 3), the opposite of righteousness and holiness.

(6.) The son of perdition—*i. e.*, of damnation; and,

(7.) The lawless (2 Thess. ii, 8; Isa. xi, 14), who, without regard to God's law, does as he pleases.

(8.) A vile person (Dan. xi, 21), to whom they would not give the honor of the kingdom; but who shall come in, peaceably, and obtain the kingdom by flatteries. Hence,

(9.) The little horn (Dan. vii, 8, 11, 20, 21), signifying a great worldly power, and therefore also represented in verses 24-27 as,

(10.) Another king, compared with the ten kings and horns existing before him. Hence,

(11.) Simply, "the king" who shall do according to his will (Dan. xi, 36; Isa. xxx, 33).

(12.) The prince that shall come, and whose people shall destroy the city and the sanctuary (Dan. ix, 26); and who afterwards shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas and the glorious holy mountain (Dan. xi, 45).

(13.) The head over many countries (Ps. cx, 6).

(14.) The head out of the house of the wicked (Hab. iii, 13, 14).

(15.) Sheshach, the last king on earth that shall drink the cup of wrath from the Lord (Jer. xxv, 26).

(16.) King of Babylon, because he is the fulfillment of the Babylonian idea (Isa. xiv, 4, and verse 12).

(17.) In the Hebrew, *Helel*, translated by the Septuagint and Vulgate "morning star," whose Latin term "Lucifer" has been accepted by the English version. In the same place,

(18.) Son of the morning. That this and the two former designations do not directly and exclusively refer to Satan, appears from verses 9-11, where the person mentioned consists of a soul and of a body; for the soul goes into the Sheol, while the body becomes the prey of worms. Again in verse 16, etc., he is called a man, and his doings are described accordingly.

(19.) The Assyrian (Isa. xxx, 31). This is proven by the context. Consequently the same person is meant in Isa. x, 5. The verses 24 to 34 describe the antichrist's last doings and end, as also the end of all the crowned rulers of the world. The adorned bough—as the original has it in verse 33—which the Lord shall cut off, is evidently the antichrist; and the high ones of stature hewn down, and the haughty humbled, are his next great ones in power. They form "the tree of beastly rulers" whose boughs are here cut off (compare Ps. lxxvi, 12), and with it also that wild multitude of beastly subjects, called in verse 34 the thickets of the forest. Nay, even the Lebanon, signifying very probably a large party of such, who favor the former orderly and state government, will share a similar fate. Consequently, then, there is in Isaiah xiv, 25, and xxi, 8, the same person meant. In the last passage the term "discomfited" may just as well read "melted." This last verse tells us how the antichrist and his warriors shall perish: by being consumed with the Spirit of the mouth of the Lord (2 Thess. ii, 8).

(20.) The boar out of the wood (Ps. lxxx, 13). A very fit designation.

(21.) The throne of iniquity (Ps. xciv, 20). Some other names we omit.

NOTE 5, page 67.—When once this image of the beast shall be completed and established as a political and religious system for the whole world, then will that Babylonian idea to organize the whole world into a universal empire of sin and carnality become a full reality. To this event the figure in Zech. v, 5-11, points. Here we see an epha, an authoritatively established and generally acknowledged measure, hence something which in its appearance is the symbol of established law and righteousness; but in that epha sat a woman, who, according to the Lord's own explanation, represents wickedness (wickedness in a vessel of authoritative and acknowledged rightness). After the woman is thrown into the epha, there is a weight of lead cast upon the mouth thereof, evidently to make it heavy. Then there come forth two women, having wings like a stork, and wind in them, and they lift up the epha between the earth and the heaven, bearing it into the land of Shinar (*i. e.*, Babylon), where a house shall be built for it, and where it shall be established and set upon its own base. Now these two women are the two demons or devils called the beast and the false prophet. The beast, as we have seen, is a she-leopard; the false prophet is the spirit animating the image of the beast, which, as a likeness of the first beast, must also be of feminine nature. These two demons are the chief instrumentalities in the furtherance and formation of this wickedness and its system. Through their united endeavors shall this system finally be established in the antichristian kingdom and future completed Babylon. Yea, if God had not made this work heavy for them, and thus restrained them (2 Thess. ii, 6, 7), they would have long before this gained their object.

NOTE 6, page 72.—This counting of the number of the beast is from S. H. Froelich, V. D. M., formerly a clergyman of the Reformed Church in the Canton Aargovie, Switzerland. He was led by the Lord from a formal Christianity to a living faith in Christ Jesus. This brought him into a position which made it impossible for him to accept human ordinances as divine, and he frankly expressed himself in that way. Civil marriage, which in our times is generally

acknowledged lawful, made him a martyr. He had fulfilled all the law required in such a case, except the prescription of the state Church, which required him to be married by one of its ministers. For this he had to suffer violent persecution, which determined him to move to France. There his civil marriage was legal. In order to clear himself of odious charges, he wrote a treatise: "Marriage in general, and my marriage in particular, Zurich, 1842." In this he shows that the doctrine of priestly sanction of marriage is a human statute or tradition, which like other human doctrines has become an object of homage. He says, page 48: "Gradually several usages were adopted which have no foundation in the Scriptures, but were invented and practiced by men, till, finally, they acquired the same respect as the Word of God; for Satan always tries to substitute his own doctrines for the doctrines of the living God, in order to gain their homage for himself."

NOTE 7, page 77.—This is the correct translation. The word "aion," here and in many other places translated *world*, never has this meaning in the Greek. It does not designate any thing material, but a period of time of different duration. In this text it signifies the period of sin when it reaches its end and a new period begins. In texts like Matt. xxiv, 3; 1 Cor. x, 11; Heb. ix, 26, a different sense is manifest if it reads "period" instead of "world."

#### NOTES TO THE BASE.

NOTE 8, page 96.—"And behold" is found in many old manuscripts. If it is accepted as belonging to the text, it signifies that John should come at every such call and see what appears. In this way his great longing to be near the book, and even to examine it closely, would have been satisfied. If it does not belong to the text, then the simple call "come" might apply to what will appear to the four riders who come one after the other.

NOTE 9, page 98.—The explanation of the law of four and seven we only extend as far as needful to our subject. An exhaustive explanation of this law in all its branches would lead too far. We will, however, give place to the following: The first of four, be it form, tone, or any thing

else, assumes to the three following the position of the base or foundation. The three following are always a further development of what the first has brought forth; consequently the *fourth* is the furthest developed of *all*. *Four* assumes a similar position to *three*, as *seven* does to *six*, namely, a completion. The law of music shows us that the first four tones in the scale (c. d. e. f.) are not exactly four, but only three and a half tones, as there is only half a step from e to f; hence, such a *four* is the exact half of *seven*, and is such in signification and extent. This is a characteristic and rule which we meet everywhere in the law of four, and is, therefore, a reliable criterion in all developments of history, as well as in the kingdom of God, and in creation. The latter may serve as an instance in the development of the first four days. The first day brings forth light, separated from darkness, but not till the fourth day does light appear clearly defined, and in its highest position, in that sun, moon, and stars are made the dispensers of it. So we see in the creation the first day as base, or foundation for the first four days' work, which completed our earth as a whole with the exception of the living things. We find the same development in the first four seals and their corresponding riders; likewise in the first four trumpets, the first four bowls, and other first fours in the usual order of seven. In music we see the farther unfolding of three, four, and seven to large numbers. For instance, the ordinary scale of *seven* tones, allows the addition of *five* others, and is then called the chromatic scale, consisting of *twelve* tones. These *five* added tones are made known by a  $\sharp$ , or a  $\flat$ . In like manner multiplicity appears in every thing, be it grade, form, tone, or color, and can always be traced back to seven, four, three, and one.

NOTE 10, page 102.—A choinix was a measure holding nearly a quart. As usually a bushel of wheat could be bought for a denarius, this price denotes a great famine. William Smith's Bible Dict., Weights and Measures.

NOTE 11, page 127.—Here is a point which has caused considerable confusion. 2 Peter iii, 10, is generally translated: "And the earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up." But the oldest manuscripts, namely, the Sinaitic, Vulgate, K. P. & 27, 29, 66, \* \* read: "And the earth

and the works that are therein shall be found." It is, therefore, a counterpart of that passing away of heaven and earth, where no place was found for them (Rev. xx, 11) which will take place after the Millennium, at the final judgment. 2 Peter iii, 10, refers to Christ's next coming to take home his own and to annihilate the wicked from the earth, before or just at the beginning of the Millennium. Then the heavens will pass away with a great noise *βοιζήδον*, as the elements of the heavenly bodies (the stars) will be melted by the heat, and fall to the earth. The earth will certainly appear enveloped in flames, yet will not be consumed, but will still be found existing. As in Noah's time the earth underwent a baptism of water, entirely disappearing under the water, yet again arising, as if from death, so likewise will it here undergo a baptism of fire, out of which there will also be a resurrection. The earth and the works that are therein will be found. Of all plants, animals, and men there will be a remnant, which will go forth as if renewed. This will be the beginning of a new time and a new condition of things on the earth, for which the whole creation groaneth (Rom. viii, 19-23), namely, the Millennium. That "shall be found" is the correct reading is shown also from other testimonies of the Lord and his apostles.

## NOTES TO THE ALTO.

NOTE 12, page 140.—The distinction between "Paradise" and "heaven." 1. Paradise is a place on high (Eph. iv, 8) at the uttermost part of heaven (Matt. xxiv, 31; Mark xiii, 27), and is, therefore, not the real inner heaven. 2. The believers are in Paradise *before* their resurrection; in heaven *after* it. 3. Thus they are in Paradise without their new body, while in heaven they have that body which they assume in the resurrection. 4. In Paradise they exist only as souls or spirits; in heaven as wholly renewed and glorified beings, both in soul and body. 5. In Paradise they await the full manifestation of their glory as sons of God (Rom. viii, 17-25; Phil. iii, 20, 21), while their bodies sleep in the dust of the earth. In heaven they are in full possession of this glory of eternal life. 6. In Paradise, they are, as the word signifies, in a garden. In heaven they will be in the great house of their father, where Jesus has gone to prepare a place for them, and from



whence he will come again to take home his bride. 7. In Paradise the account with the servants of the Lord has not yet taken place. In heaven, according to their received reward, they will reign with Christ, as priests of God over the earth. Thus the distinction consists not only in the locality, but also in the condition of the believers.

NOTE 13, page 142.—“Spread his tent over them,” as it reads in the Greek, points to the fact which is given in Rev. xxi, 22: “And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God, the Almighty, and the Lamb, are the temple thereof.” So closely united with God will these blessed ones be, that the temple in which they will be, from this time on, as priests of God and servants of Christ, will not be any thing made or created, but will be God himself and the Lamb, in unspeakable glory.

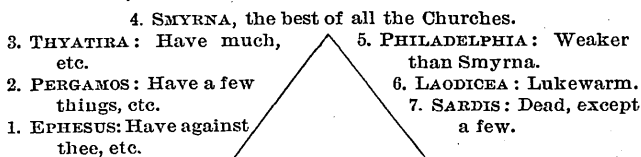
NOTE 14, page 156.—It is interesting to Christians to observe the path of the light of God. It began in Paradise in the Armenian highlands. There we find the candlestick from the time of Adam until after the flood. Then it moved, probably in Noah’s lifetime, southwest toward Salem (afterward called Jerusalem), and shone in Melchisedec; then in Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in different parts of the land of Canaan. Then it went still farther southwest toward Egypt. From thence it moved into the wilderness, where it was, according to the command of God, typified in a material golden candlestick in the tabernacle; then back again to Canaan to shine in Jerusalem, the city chosen of God. With the fall of Jerusalem, or in reality before it, God removed, not the typified, but the real light—the light of his grace in Christ Jesus northwest to the uttermost end of Asia, just across from Europe. The seven Churches of Asia were for that time what Jerusalem once was for Israel—the chief seat of the light of God. However, the Lord threatens even them, at least the one which takes the first position among them, that he will remove the light from her. She shall not remain the chief seat of light if she will not turn and do her first works; a threat, which, alas, was fulfilled. This candlestick, and probably others also, moved into Europe, some going far west and northwest. We do not assume to say where all these candlesticks stand, but we believe that in their westward movement, more than one came to America.

NOTE 15, page 160.—Thus we read in the oldest, the Sinaitic manuscript, and in six others besides, namely, 12, 17, \* 36, 43, *πολλα*, 28, 79.

NOTE 16, page 164.—“The beginning of the creation of God.” Paul says in Col. i, 18, that Christ is the beginning, the first born from the dead, that in all things he might have the pre-eminence. These two passages express the same thing, and do not apply to Christ as the Creator, but as a creature; still, not as a creature of the present ruined creation, but of the new creation of God. Through the first Adam, our creation was delivered to destruction and death. Through Christ it will be redeemed and renewed. (Rev. xxi, 5.) Our present creation began with the things of the earth, and ended on the sixth day with the creation of man. Here, man was the last work of creation. In the new creation the order is reversed. Man is the first and the earth will be the last in regeneration. (Rev. xxi.) After Christ died, according to his earthly nature, he became, so to say, regenerated by the power of God into a new, glorious, and immortal man, in which respect he is called the first born from the dead. In rising from the dead as a new, glorified, spiritual man, he was the first of a new creation, and all who believe in him will be made partakers of the same. Thus, he became the second Adam. Out of him and through him a new humanity is called into life, and as soon as all of these new beings are ready, the earth itself will be renewed in order to make it a fit dwelling-place for this renewed humanity. Thus Christ is the beginning of that creation which is at present in course of formation, for *now* men become created anew in Christ Jesus by the Word and the Spirit of our God.

NOTE 17, page 169.—One other development in the order of seven is worth mentioning, as it is given in the oldest manuscript of the New Testament. There we find the order of the names of the seven Churches in Asia as follows: Ephesus, Pergamos, Thyatira, Smyrna, Philadelphia, Laodicea, Sardis. (Rev. i, 11.) That this order is not accidental is clear from the fact that this position represents correctly the real course of development of the Church of God in seven periods, from the time of John to the coming of the Lord. The first three stages upward proceed from bad to

worse; but instead of the fourth, the highest, being the worst, Smyrna is the best of all; and from this Church it goes downward, gradually growing weaker till it reaches dead Sardis, thus:



That the course of the Church of God from the time of John to the coming of the Lord will be in this order, can be seen in the explanation of the seven bowls in the Tenor.

NOTE 18, page 172.—The altar of sacrifice has no place in heaven, hence not in the holy place, and much less in the Holy of holies, but only in the outer court. “Wherefore Jesus also . . . suffered without the gate.” (Heb. xiii, 12.) This is a reason why the cross, in itself so significant, has no place, nor is it even alluded to in the many heavenly presentations given in the Revelations. It belongs to the curse and to the putting away of all unrighteousness and filth of sin. Only the blood (life) of that which was sacrificed in the outer court is carried into the holy place and the Holy of holies.

NOTE 19, page 205.—Sun, moon, and stars were the lights created on the *fourth* day. Thus it accords with this fourth stage of creation, that the enemy of truth undertakes to hinder and destroy the work of the new creation now forming in its *fourth* stage.

NOTE 20, page 207.—The Greek preposition *eis* signifies *in, after something*, and may, therefore, be taken in this sense here—a star from heaven falling into the earth.

NOTE 21, page 230.—“All Europe rises in arms—as if raised off its hinges, to overthrow Asia, fights nearly two hundred years with its utmost and united strength—and gains nothing except the changeful or wavering possession of a small coastland, which it is scarcely strong enough to hold, and which after great misfortunes and constant dangers, it loses at last forever. Many crowned heads, many princes and lords, the flower of the knighthood of all kingdoms, and

millions of privates, fell, victims to this great cause." (Rotteck, vol. ii, p. 161.)

NOTE 22, page 247.—Chapters xl, xli, and xlii in Ezekiel, where a man is measuring with a line of flax and a reed, give the measurement of the future new temple in all its parts. In Zech. ii, 1-5 it is the same. There the measurements of the future Jerusalem are given. In our text a rod is used to measure that which exists: the temple of God as it will be in that time, and as God has destined that it shall continue, in spite of the fury of the adversary, in that last and most dreadful time.

NOTE 23, page 254.—When, in the dominion of the beast, according to the idea of the Socialists, marriage will be abolished, and in all other things animalism will be the rule, then the name of Sodom-and-Egypt will appear justified. The Scriptures speak of this city in Isa. xxv, 2, as a counterpart to Zion, the city of God, which at the coming of Christ will be established on earth forever. Here the prophet speaks of this city Sodom-and-Egypt three times in succession. "For thou hast made of a city an heap; of a defended city a ruin, a palace of strangers to be no city; it shall never be built." This describes its destruction, and from the context it will be clear that it has reference to the coming of the Lord. According to this, verse 3 also has reference to God's people and the future city of God, where it says, "Therefore shall the strong people glorify thee, the city of the terrible nations shall fear thee," etc. On the other hand, Sodom-and-Egypt is meant where the prophet says further, "For he bringeth down them that dwell on high; the lofty city he layeth it low; he layeth it low even to the ground; he bringeth it even to the dust." (Isa. xxvi, 5.) Again, "Yet the defended city shall be desolate, and the habitation forsaken and left like a wilderness." (Isa. xxvii, 10.) Isa. xxxii, 19, also refers to it, "When it shall hail, coming down on the forest; and the city shall be low in a low place." Balaam's prophecy also has reference to this city, or organization of the beast. (Num. xxiv.) After Balaam, in verses 17, 18, described the coming of Christ as a Star coming out of Jacob, and as a Scepter rising out of Israel, which should smite the corners of Moab and destroy all the sons of confusion, possess Edom, etc., he adds in verse 19, "Out of Jacob shall come he that

shall have dominion and shall destroy what remaineth of the city" (not cities). Thus we read in the Hebrew. It clearly points toward that great city—the beast organization or kingdom of the world, which shall be destroyed at the time of Christ's coming—the time when Christ's kingdom shall be established on earth. (Rev. xi, 15.) Remnants of old sinful habits may still show themselves, but will not be tolerated (Isa. lxy, 20); for here the Church of God will enter the period of being "terrible like an army with banners," toward its opponents. The following also refers to this time: "Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." (Ps. ii, 9; Rev. ii, 26-28.)

NOTE 24, page 255.—On account of the frequent reference made to the *seventy weeks of Daniel*, it may be desirable to have a presentation of the entire prophecy. We give here an exact translation from the original, with our view of it.

Dan. ix, 24: "Seventy weeks are determined over thy people and over thy holy city to finish the transgression, and to seal the sins, to forgive iniquity, and to bring an everlasting righteousness, to seal vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most holy." Seal means also *lock*. A week is called in Hebrew *a seven*. These seventy weeks comprise prophetically the whole time which it takes to conclude Israel's and Jerusalem's downtrodden condition, which is not yet accomplished. (Rom. xi, 25-27.)

Verse 25: "Know therefore and understand that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and build up Jerusalem unto the Christ, the Prince, are seven weeks and sixty and two weeks. Streets and trenches shall be restored, but in troublous times." The first division of SEVEN WEEKS, or seven times seven, which are forty and nine years, begin with the time in Nehemiah ii (445 B. C.) and extend to Malachi, the last prophet of the Old Covenant (396 B. C.).

The second division of SIXTY AND TWO WEEKS, or four hundred and thirty-four years, which follow, brings us to the time of Christ, when Israel and Jerusalem were partially restored, but in troublous times.

Verse 26: "And after these sixty and two weeks shall Christ be cut off, and have nothing. And the people of a Prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary, whose end thereof shall be [as] by a flood; and unto the

end war, determined desolations." This cutting off of Christ after the sixty and two weeks consisted not only in his crucifixion, but also in Israel's persistent rejection of him, in that even after the crucifixion they utterly refused to receive Christ in the time for repentance granted them by God. This was the way they cut him off, and therefore he had nothing of Israel as a people. The sixty and two weeks end with the time which God had given Israel for repentance. After this the Romans came and destroyed the city and the sanctuary like a flood. Then until the end (the coming of the Lord) is war, determined desolations. The Romans are here called the people of the Prince that shall come, because out of Rome, the sixth head of the beast, the antichrist shall come. With this destruction of Jerusalem and the sanctuary, and before

The third division of this prophetic time—that is, THE SEVENTIETH OR LAST WEEK begins—a long interval of time elapses, of which Daniel only says, "And till the end war, determined desolations." This is the time during which Israel, through God's judgment, is like "the court which is without the temple," left out and not measured (Rev. xi, 2), and during which it exists in the wilderness of the nations, which tread under foot the holy city forty and two months. Therefore Israel's history is entirely omitted from the time of Jerusalem's destruction to the time of the beginning of the *last or seventieth week* of Daniel's prophecy. Similar intervals are found between the sixth and seventh seals, between the sixth and seventh trumpet, etc. The description of the third division of this prophetic time, or the *seventieth week*, will now be given.

Verse 27: "And he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week, and in the middle of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the meat-offering to cease." In this *seventieth week* that prince, springing from the sixth head of the beast, being himself the seventh head, will favor the Israelites in the beginning of his reign in so far as to allow them liberty about their worship; but in the middle of the week he will break his promise, and the Israelites, who will then again have their temple and their sacrifices, will be made to feel the power of him who pretends to be God, and who even occupies a place in the temple of God.

Now follows that passage from Daniel which the Lord impresses upon readers of the Scriptures as being specially

important. "Whoso readeth, let him understand." (Matt. xxiv, 15.) The passage is the following:

"And the abomination of desolation will be upon the pinnacle and [that] until the destruction and what is determined be poured upon the destroyer." It is to be noticed that the pinnacle here is the same upon which Satan led the Lord when he tempted him—a high wing of the temple at Jerusalem. Thus here will be placed the abominations of the antichrist; perhaps even his own image and other abominable things, and that, too, until the destruction and what is determined be poured upon the destroyer—*i. e.*, until the latter be destroyed by the mouth of the Lord, and by the brightness of his coming. (2 Thess. ii, 8.)

#### NOTES TO THE TENOR AND THE CLOSING PART.

NOTE 25, page 290.—Some might here ask, Why was not the Reformation felt more in the Greek Church? It is to be observed: (1) This Church preserved in a great degree its ancient character of the fourth and fifth centuries; hence it was free from those extreme errors into which the Roman Church at that time fell, which more especially created the demand for the Reformation. Thus, theoretically, the Greek Church, in spite of its errors, does not take its position far behind other state Churches, as they are since the Reformation. (2) The Reformation did exert an influence upon the Greek Church. Because Israel was God's chosen people was no reason that what he did through Israel was only for Israel. It was done for all peoples, and this influence which Israel exerted upon other people was very great, yet it was not generally acknowledged.

NOTE 26, page 349.—The events of the seventh bowl form the beginning of the fifth period, which includes that time of great tribulation for the believers which will end at the coming of the Lord. Here the second flight of the woman begins, and will continue as long as flight will be possible, even when the antichrist will already be manifest. See Luke xvii, 22-36. Although it has generally been assumed that Matt. xxiv, Mark xiii, and Luke xxi refer to the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, still a thorough consideration of their contents compels us to refer their chief meaning to this last time, directly before the coming of the Lord.

NOTE 27, page 377.—The manner in which, in the last times, the martyrs will be put to death is signified: *πελεκίζω*—to cut off or decapitate with an ax or a hatchet.

NOTE 28, page 389.—The new earth will essentially differ from the present inasmuch as there will be no sea, and especially as it will not consist of such coarse matter as this one. It will be of substance in harmony with the glorified humanity, a fit dwelling-place for the first-born of this new creation, the second Adam—Christ—appropriate for the reception of the new Jerusalem, coming down from heaven upon it. Still, before this final event will the former earth be called *new* after it is freed from the bondage of corruption (Rom. viii, 23), and righteousness shall dwell therein; for this latter reason also the heavens are called *new* (2 Pet. iii, 13; Isa. lxv, 17; lxvi, 21); and also because they will be freed from the hosts of evil spirits, who with their leader will, at Christ's coming, be shut up in the abyss. (Rev. xx, 1-3; Isa. xxiv, 21, 22.)

NOTE 29, page 389.—Literally, *tents*, as in Rev. vii, 15. See note 2 in Alto.

NOTE 30, page 401.—“Bright morning star.” This expression probably refers to Isa. xiv, where the antichrist is also called “morning star.” Inasmuch as he is the fullness of the manifestation of Satan, Satan also bears this name. In comparison with these two stars of darkness, Christ is truly called “the *bright* morning star.”

## REMARKS.

The Psalms and the Prophets contain too many passages referring to the events of the last times and the coming of Christ to note them all here. Whoever has a clear knowledge of history for basis, as is found in the fourfold presentation given in the Revelation, will understand those passages in reading them without further explanation. Joel ii, 28-32 might be an exception, as cited by Peter in Acts ii, 17-22. The fact is, all three chapters of Joel refer to the last times and the day of the Lord. To understand Peter it must be observed that a new period began with Christ, the essence and power of which made itself manifest on the day of Pentecost. This period ends at the coming of the Lord—the day



of the Lord will be the last of this period. Although no blood and fire and smoke appeared on the Pentecostal day, still the Holy Spirit was poured out on them, and Israel and the world enter a new period in which all these things will happen. This was the essential beginning of the unfolding of these things.

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## General Presentation of the Revelation.

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[To give the reader a general oversight of the whole in its connections, we present a grouping of the main historical points. Non-historical points are omitted.]

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### VARIED ARRANGEMENT OF THE REVELATION.

The *first* arrangement appears as that in which John wrote the book—namely, in its chapters, from the first to the last. This order is the one in which he saw and heard these things, and according to this the contents form three main parts:

I. THE INTRODUCTION, from chapters i to iii.

II. THE FOUR PRESENTATIONS of the History of our Present Period:

*The Base*, from chapters iv to vi.

*The Alto*, from chapters vii to xi.

*The Treble*, from chapters xii to xiv.

*The Tenor*, from chapters xv to xix.

III. THE CLOSING PART, from chapters xx to xxii.

*But the Revelation has still other arrangements.* Closer observation will show that its prophetic historical part, that which will shortly come to pass, begins with the Base—namely, with the opening of the book which contains the Revelation (chapters v and vi); for out of this book came what in John's time was still future history—that is,

(a) In the first six seals the general presentation of our history in six divisions; and

(b) In the seventh seal the specification of these six divisions, or entire history.

That we in our treatment of the Revelation did not follow the order of chapters, neither begin with the Base, but

with the Treble, happened not from choice. We were compelled to do so by the peculiar characteristics of the four parts, and the necessity to present history in its chronological order.

### THE TREBLE (CHAPTERS XII TO XIV).

The grand and glorious picture with which this part of the Revelation begins throws its shining rays of heavenly light backward and forward through the ages of time. It points to the very beginning of the history of man, and of his redemption. It shows us the unfolding of the plan of salvation of the Church of God in four stages, which form just so many periods, of which the third period is the one in which we live. The fourth is still future. The Treble describes the leading parties of the warfare between sin and righteousness, and names some of their prominent features. The Church of God, clothed in light; Christ, the light and life of God rising out of her and giving her his light is one party. The dragon, the beast, and the false prophet, three demons, as the chief leaders of angels and men are presented as the opposite party (chapters xii and xiii). Chapter xiv contains a presentation of the last times: (1) Encouragements and admonitions to God's people to be faithful to him. (2) The coming of the Lord for the ingathering of his own to the heavenly garner, and also for the cutting off of the wicked, as the clusters of the vine of the earth, and their destruction in the great wine-press of the wrath of God.

### THE BASE (CHAPTERS IV TO VI).

This part of Revelation gives general history without specification. It presents a whole division of time in one picture in a general way or outline. The whole history of Christ's first coming and his work is divided into six parts, with as many historical presentations. These are (Rev. vi):

1. A *white* horse, and he that sat on him had a bow, and a crown was given unto him; he went forth conquering and to conquer. A time in which the adversary secretly, and under the mantle of innocence, sowed evil seed. From the apostles to the time of Constantine.

2. A *red* horse, and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should

kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword. A time of war and bloodshed amongst the professors of Christianity. From the time of Constantine until about the beginning of the Middle Ages.

3. A *black* horse, and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand, etc. A time of spiritual famine and darkness. From the beginning of the Middle Ages to the preparation for the Reformation.

4. A *pale* horse, and his name that sat on him was *death*, and Hades followed with him, etc. A time which forms the culmination of the three preceding: in which power is given death and Hades to do their work in four different ways. Time, from the preparation of the Reformation to the end of our present period.

5. *The altar*, and under it the souls of them that were slain for the Word of God, and for the testimony which they held, etc. A time of great tribulation for the Church of God. From the fall of Babylon, when the beast rises from the abyss, to the coming of the Lord.

6. *The day of the Lord*. No figures, but all mighty and terrible realities. Although a part of it appears as if it were specified history, still it may be seen to be only outlines of that great day. What this part lacks in duration of time, compared with the other divisions, is fully made up in the tremendous importance of its events.

After Soprano and Base have thus prepared the way, we come to

#### THE ALTO (CHAPTERS VII TO XI, ALSO INCLUDING CHAPTERS I TO III).

SPECIFIED HISTORY.—This begins with the sowing of the evil seed, and its growth from the time that Christ sowed the good seed in his field. Of this the time of the apostles gives us many instances. So, also, do the Churches in Asia, of which the Lord chose seven to represent the general condition of the Church of God in regard to the good seed, and to the bad seed sown by the enemy—to show how far this evil extended in its growth.

Of seven Churches, only two are without blame. False doctrines creep in everywhere. It is silent history because the forces work in secret, directly after the opening of the

seventh seal (Rev. viii, 1). This is the first division, represented in general by the first rider.

THE FIRST TRUMPET (Rev. viii, 7).—Specified history. Hail and fire mingled with blood are cast upon the earth; and the third part of the earth, and the third part of the trees, and all green grass was burnt. This was the time beginning with Constantine, when the Church and state melted into one institution. The state, meaning well, offered all its influence and power to further the Church in every respect. The Church, however, being a spiritual kingdom, was not helped through these worldly means, but for the greater part ruined.

THE SECOND TRUMPET (Rev. viii, 1-9).—A great judgment of God executed upon the worldly powers for their corrupting encroachment in the things concerning the kingdom of God. Here the sixth head of the beast, which John declared to be existing at his time, is as if deadly wounded (Rev. xvii, 10; xiii, 3). The Huns, like a great burning mountain, are cast into the sea of the nations, whereby the third part thereof become blood, destroying the third part of the worldly kingdoms then existing. Time, about 433 A. D.

THE THIRD TRUMPET (Rev. viii, 10, 11).—A great angel of Satan, disguised as an angel of light, forsaking his former position on high, falls to the earth; namely, the other beast, or the false prophet, brings under his influence the third part of the nations and the third part of the sources of religious doctrines. This is the great event, and the time when the devil succeeded in giving spirit to the image of the beast, to the system of falsified doctrines made by men; in filling this image with his spirit as if he dwelt within it, so that he might use it as a mighty tool to gain Satan's ends. Exact time impossible to state.

THESE THREE TRUMPETS form the second division of our period presented by the second rider—times of strife and bloodshed.

THE FOURTH TRUMPET (Rev. viii, 12).—Culmination of the work begun in the first trumpet. The Church of God in its threefold character as sun, moon, and stars (Rev. xii, 1) was smitten so that the third part of them was darkened, and the day should not shine for the third part of it, and the night in like manner. This indicates a darkening of knowledge in spiritual things among the believers them-

selves. Exact time not definable, yet before the fifth trumpet, and, according to the law of four, its influence reaches to the seventh trumpet.

THE FIFTH TRUMPET (Rev. ix, 1-12).—The devastation caused by the Mohammedans, a judgment of God upon so-called Christianity for so willingly entering the threefold darkness of the former trumpet. As men loved darkness more than light, darkness of the abyss came upon them. This was the first woe prophesied after the fourth trumpet. Time, about 609 A. D.

THE SIXTH TRUMPET (Rev. ix, 13-21).—A still greater judgment. The loosing of the four angels into the great river Euphrates, that is Turkey. Four Turkish nations, inspired by spirits from the abyss, kill the third part of men with fire, smoke, and brimstone. Time, beginning 903 A. D.

These fourth, fifth, and sixth trumpets form combined the third division presented under the figure of the third rider. The times of darkness and of hunger, when the wheat, the pure word of God, is scarce.

After the tenth chapter, which is the connecting link to the Tenor, the Alto continues its further specifications in the eleventh chapter, speaking historically of the altar, the temple of God, and those who worship therein, which represent the house of God on earth, and God's children. This figure specified, to verse 10, agrees with the fifth division presented in Rev. vi, 9-11:

- a. The children of God in connection with the altar;
- b. But also those slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held. Consequently the eleventh chapter, from verses 1-10, is a specification of the history of the last times and its great tribulations—the fifth division of our period. God's children will have great power in prayer, namely, to shut heaven that it rain not, etc., verse 6; but when they have finished their testimony, the beast that cometh up out of the abyss will make war with them, overcome, and kill them. Their dead bodies will be in the streets of the great city, spiritually called Sodom-and-Egypt, etc.

Verses 11 and 12 describe the sixth division of time, the coming of the Lord to take home his own. They ascend to heaven in a cloud, seen by their enemies.

Verse 13. At the same hour the Lord cometh for the

destruction of the wicked, killing seven thousand names of men. Canaan, the tenth part of the great city, until now belonging to worldly powers, again comes into the possession of Israel. Now the second woe is past, and the third comes quickly at

THE SOUNDING OF THE SEVENTH TRUMPET, verses 15-19.  
This is the beginning of the Millennium.

### THE TENOR (CHAPTERS XV TO XIX),

Also gives us specified history. It is contained in chapter xvi, and consists of the last seven plagues poured out of seven bowls. In order of time the Tenor follows the sixth trumpet, is thereby connected with the tenth chapter, forming the fourth division, in general represented by the fourth rider, whose name is "Death" sitting on a pale horse, and who is followed by Hades. This is the counterpart of what is represented in the Tenor; for in the first four bowls it brings the Church of God into an extraordinary condition of unfolding life and power.

The *first bowl* poured into the earth. A purification of the doctrinal system of the corrupt Church (Rev. xvi, 2). About two hundred years before the Reformation.

The *second bowl* poured into the sea. A transportation of this purified system into the sea of nations (verse 3), representing the Reformation itself. 1517 A. D.

The *third bowl* poured into the rivers and fountains of waters. A visitation of God on single nations, by religious wars (as for instance, the thirty years war, and others), on account of the bloodshed of the saints, to teach professors of Christianity the lesson of mutual toleration and forbearance (verses 4-7). Soon after the Reformation.

The *fourth bowl* poured out into the sun, is the completion of the work begun in the first bowl—the reformation of the Church through the intensification of heat in such a degree that men blaspheme the name of God (verses 8, 9). From about the end of the thirty years' war, 1648 A. D.

Now follows the specified history of the adversary.

The *fifth bowl* being poured on the throne of the beast, its dominion is darkened. Time, the French Revolution of 1789, when the spirit of the beast in terrible darkness revealed itself, and showed what it wanted.

The *sixth bowl* poured into the great river Euphrates, drying up its waters. The Turks, as a people, gradually decreasing, preparing the way for Israel to repossess the land of Canaan. Further,

Three unclean spirits (devils) come out of the mouth of the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet, to go forth to the kings of the earth, to gather them together unto the war of the great day of God, the Almighty. Even here, Satan and his consorts begin the war, which was first directed toward Jerusalem, then at Harmageddon, in the land of Edom, the great wine-press of God. At the coming of the Lord from heaven, this warfare will be decided in the destruction of his enemies. The time of the outpouring of this bowl is about the year 1830, at which time the beast renewed his activity with special energy.

The *seventh bowl* brings the next great event in the world's history, the greatest revolution of social, political, and religious importance, that ever happened since men dwell on earth. Here the beast is victorious. This is, without doubt, the time when the spirit of the corporation from the abyss ascends to remain a little while on the earth. With the seventh bowl the terrors of the fifth division of time begin. The "great city" contracts into three parts. Former national organizations fall. The wrath of God will be enacted by the enraged followers of the beast on the Roman Catholic Church. All moral organizations flee out of the dominion of the beast; for to remain is impossible.

With the seventh bowl, when Babylon's fall takes place, the coming of the Lord is closely connected, as is shown in Chapter xix. Verses 5-9 speak of the marriage of the Lamb, the preparing of his bride, and the marriage supper. Verses 11-21 speak of the appearance of the Lord with his hosts for the destruction of the wicked.

REMARK.—It will easily be seen that the last time and the coming of the Lord, representing the fifth and sixth divisions of time, are presented four times:

1. In the *Treble*, chapter xiv, and the last part of chapter xii.
2. In the *Base*, chapter vi, 9-17.
3. In the *Alto*, chapter xi.
4. In the *Tenor*, from the seventh bowl to chapter xix.

## THE CLOSING PART (CHAPTERS XX TO XXII).

Rev. xx, 1-3, show us the binding and shutting up of Satan in the abyss a thousand years, after which time he will regain his freedom for a little while.

Verses 4-6 describe the reign over the earth by those belonging to the first resurrection, as priests of God with Christ in heaven.

Verses 7-10.—Satan, freed from his prison, begins his work again, for which he is cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where a thousand years before his former confederates, the beast and the false prophet were thrown.

Verses 11-15.—The appearance of the great white throne and him that sat upon it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. The general or final judgment, when all who ever lived on earth will appear before the Judge of all to be judged according to their works. See Matt. xxv, 31-46.

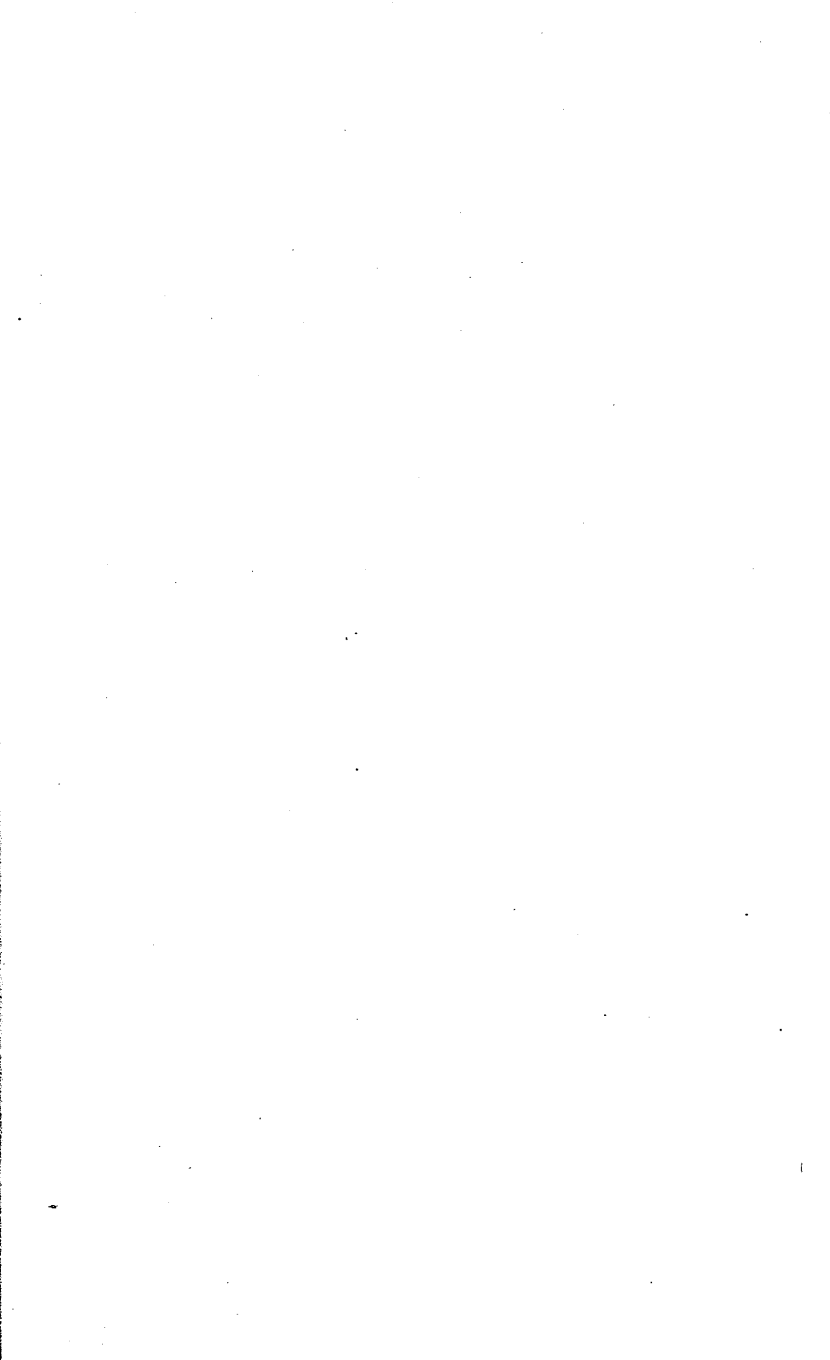
*Chapters xxi and xxii.*—The beginning of an entirely new time under new conditions; new, not only as compared with our present time, but also as compared with the time of the Millennium, and as it will be until the appearance of the great white throne. Referring to this time, verse 4 says: "The first things are passed away." Here, then, is something different, something new, which is brought into existence just at this time (verse 5). Such will be the new heaven and the new earth. The believers who rise from their graves at the beginning of the Millennium, and dwell with their Lord in heaven, in their Father's house (John xiv, 2, 3), will come from heaven to dwell on this new earth. The great mansion of their Father, the new Jerusalem, coming down upon the earth, is further described in this and the following chapter. It is the home of those who partake of the first resurrection, also called the first-born and priests of God, to distinguish them from those coming after, also saved, who shall live on the new earth. This new earth will be the perfection of God's greatest glory, for the throne of God and the Lamb will come down into the new Jerusalem. It will be called, *The tabernacle of God with men.*



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